MY MISSION TO RUSSIA

AND OTHER DIPLOMATIC MEMORIES

SIR GEORGE BUCHANAN

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MY MISSION TO RUSSIA

(Photo: Fred. Hollyer)

LADY GEORGINA BUCHANAN

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My Mission to Russia

and

Other Diplomatic Memories

By

The Right Hon.

Sir GEORGE BUCHANAN

G.C.B., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O.

British Ambassador, Petrograd, 1910-1918

With Maps and Illustrations

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My Mission to Russia

CHAPTER XIX

1916

THE year 1916 witnessed a distinct improvement in the matter of the delivery of war material from abroad as well as of the output of the factories at home, while, thanks to the initiative taken by the zemstvos and town councils, new munition works were being started in different parts of the country. The military outlook on the whole was more promising. In Armenia the army, under the command of the Grand Duke Nicholas, had advanced in mid-winter over a difficult mountainous country, and by the end of February had occupied Erzeroum. On the Bessarabian front the Russians, ever ready to render what assistance they could to their Allies in the west, had taken the offensive with a view to affording some relief to the gallant defenders of Verdun, who were being so hard pressed by the Germans. Though attended with a certain measure of success, this offensive yielded no concrete results owing to its having been launched without sufficient preparation and to a deficiency of aeroplanes and other engines of war. On the other hand, the offensive begun in June by the army under Brussiloff to relieve the Austrian pressure on the

Italian front was completely successful. Before the end of the month the Russians were masters of the Bukowine and, after capturing an enormous number of prisoners, were advancing across the Carpathians.

It was the moment, if ever, for Roumania to march. Her long-expectant attitude had caused a French diplomat to remark that she was but waiting to *voler au secours du vainqueur;* yet, now that the Russians were victorious, she still hesitated. General Alexeieff, therefore, let it be known at Bucharest that, if she allowed the present favourable opportunity to pass, her intervention would leave Russia indifferent. He at the same time made the promised despatch of a Russian detachment to the Dobrudja conditional on her at once attacking Bulgaria. This she refused to do, although, in the opinion of the best military authorities, it was, tactically speaking, the right move for her to make.

The Roumanian Minister, with whom I discussed the question, contended that Transylvania was Roumania's natural objective, as she did not covet any Bulgarian territory. He therefore insisted that it was against Austria that all her efforts must be directed; while I endeavoured to persuade him, but in vain, that the surest way for Roumania to win Transylvania was for her to put the Bulgarian army out of action. Eventually Roumania was allowed to have her way, and at the end of August she declared war on Austria. But it was too late. The Russian offensive was nearly spent; the men were tired out; the artillery ammunition was almost exhausted, and supplies were running short owing to the difficulties of transport. The Roumanian advance into Transylvania, which had proceeded satisfactorily for about a fortnight, was suddenly

checked by an Austro-German offensive, and the Roumanian army had to retire precipitately all along the line. In the south, too, they suffered a severe defeat at the hands of the Bulgars, on whose neutrality they had at first been foolish enough to count.

Meanwhile the Emperor at the beginning of February had parted with Goremykin and appointed Stürmer President of the Council. Stürmer's grandfather had been Austrian Commissary at St. Helena during Napoleon's residence on that island, and he had himself successively held the posts of Director of the Ceremonies at the Russian Court and of Governor of Jaroslav. With but a second-rate intelligence, without any experience of affairs, a sycophant, bent solely on the advancement of his own interests and extremely ambitious, he owed his new appointment to the fact that he was a friend of Rasputin and that he was backed by the Empress's camarilla. I shall have more to say about him later on, but I may mention, as showing the sort of man that he was, that he chose as his *chef de cabinet* a former agent of the *okhrana* (secret police), Manouiloff by name, who was a few months afterwards arrested and tried for blackmailing a bank.

The Minister of the Interior, Khvostoff, who had, like Stürmer, risen to power through the camarilla's influence, was dismissed at the same time. The reasons for his disgrace were disclosed by a leading Petrograd journal, and though I cannot vouch for their accuracy, they throw such a light on the situation as to merit reproduction. Khvostoff, it would appear, had quarrelled with his former friends, and being ambitious, had conceived the idea of playing the part of a national benefactor by ridding Russia of Rasputin. He accord-

ingly sent a secret agent, named Rjevsky, to Christiania to confer with the ex-monk Iliodore, who had once been Rasputin's friend but who was now one of his bitterest enemies. After discussing the question in all its bearings, Iliodore and Rjevsky arranged to have Rasputin and some of his intimates assassinated. The assassins, it was further agreed, were to receive 60,000 roubles for their services from the Minister of the Interior. The plot was discovered before it could mature, and Rjevsky, who was arrested at the frontier on his return to Russia, was said to have made a full confession. Whether or not the above story is true in all its details, the fact remains that Rasputin and Khvostoff had engaged in a trial of strength, in which both had done their best to discredit the other with the Emperor. Rasputin in the end gained the day, and Khvostoff was dismissed.

Early in February I had an audience, in which I made my first serious attempt to induce the Emperor to steer a more liberal course. After speaking of the growing feeling of discontent that was finding open expression among all classes of the nation, I told him that officers, and even generals, who had returned from the front were declaring that it was time to make a clean sweep of all those who were responsible for the sufferings of the army. The sacrifices which his people had made in the war merited, I said, some return, and I would appeal to His Majesty to concede, as an act of grace for services rendered, what it might be humiliating to grant as a concession to revolutionary threats. Would he not, I asked, avail himself of the present unique opportunity of drawing closer the bonds which the war had forged between Sovereign and

people, by taking some step towards meeting the wishes of his people?

After warning me not to attach exaggerated importance to the stories current in Petrograd, the Emperor went on to say that he fully appreciated the sacrifices which his people had made, but that the time for concessions had not yet come. "You will remember," he continued, "how at the very outset I told the nation that it must concentrate all its efforts on the war and that questions of internal reform must wait till after the conclusion of peace." As I was taking my leave I made a further final appeal, saying: "If Your Majesty is unable to make any fundamental concessions at present, will you not at any rate give your people some sign that will encourage them to hope for better things to come in a not distant future?" The Emperor smiled as he gave me his hand, but did not reply to my question.

Though I cannot take the credit of having suggested the form which it took, His Majesty did, a fortnight later, give such a sign by attending the opening sitting of the Duma and by making a speech in which, after saying how happy he was to find himself in the midst of his people, he invoked God's blessings on its labours. It was, as my friend Sazonoff said to me at the time, "the happiest day in Russia's history"; but the hopes founded on it were not destined to live. There was to be no break in the reactionary policy of the Government, and it was not long before its relations with the Duma again became strained. In March five Socialist deputies, accused of having organized a revolutionary propaganda in the army, were condemned to deportation for life to Siberia, though, according to Kerensky,

who defended them, their action had been confined to trying to counter a movement in favour of an understanding between Russian and German reactionaries. In the following month Polivanoff, the popular War Minister, who had proved himself an honest and capable administrator, was dismissed and replaced by Schouvaieff, a complete nullity. Polivanoff had never been a *persona grata* with the Emperor, and his disgrace was attributed to the fact that he was on intimate terms with the Octobrist leader Guchkoff, who had incurred the Empress's undying hatred for having made a scathing attack on Rasputin in the Duma.

Early in April I went with my wife and daughter to the Crimea for a much-needed holiday, and I never enjoyed anything so much as the fortnight which we spent there. After the ice and snow of Petrograd it was too delightful to see the sunny side of Russia, to revel in the marvellous blue of what is so inaptly termed the Black Sea and in the romantic scenery of its coast. After spending a couple of days at Sebastopol we went to Yalta, and as the Government had kindly placed at our disposal a most comfortable saloon carriage with sleeping compartments for the whole of our trip, as well as motors whenever we wanted them, we were able to make excursions to all the places of interest in the neighbourhood. The only drawback was that the authorities insisted on giving an official character to my visit. Wherever we went we were presented with bread and salt and with addresses of welcome to which I had to reply. At the Yacht Club at Yalta I was received by a guard of honour composed of students of the gymnasium who were training for military service,

and by a band playing "God save the King." At Livadia, where we went to assist at the inauguration of a hospital for the wounded, founded by the Empress, the names of the King and Queen were included in the prayers of the Orthodox service that preceded the ceremony, while Their Majesties' healths were enthusiastically drunk at the repast which followed. At one of the many beautiful villas which we visited we were not only presented with bread and salt on a silver platter, but found in our motor, on leaving, a case with a dozen bottles of old Burgundy, whose praises I had sung while drinking it at luncheon.

It is terribly sad to look back on those happy bygone days, and to think of all the misery and misfortunes which have befallen those who showed us such kindness and hospitality.

On our way home we crossed the Aie Petri to Kokos, a Tartar village, where we lunched with Prince Yusupoff in his beautiful villa, built in the Tartar style. On our arrival we were met by the Tartar villagers, who presented us with bread and salt, while the headman made a long speech, which the Prince translated for us, expressing admiration for England and invoking blessings on the King. Then, continuing our journey, we arrived in the evening at Bahtchi Sarai—the former residence of the Khans of the Crimea—close to which there is a ruined town, which was deserted a century ago by its inhabitants, the Karaites, an old Jewish sect whose position is far superior to that of the ordinary Jews in Russia. In 1916 their descendants were still holding their services in the synagogue, the only building left intact, and a special service was held there in our honour in which prayers were said

for the King and Queen. After the service we were entertained at a wonderful tea, at which the chief delicacies were roseleaf jam, hot honey-cakes and a kind of Devonshire cream. Then we were given a dinner at the old palace of Bahtchi Sarai—for which we had but little appetite—and after dinner we were taken to a mosque to witness a weird performance by a sect of dancing dervishes. We then drove to the station, where we found our saloon carriage awaiting us, and returned to Petrograd, spending twelve hours at Kieff on our way.

A few days later, on May 5, I had a long audience with the Emperor, in which His Majesty touched on every variety of subject. He began by questioning me about my visit to the Crimea and about the walks which I had taken in the hills, for the Emperor was passionately fond of walking and invariably tired out all who accompanied him. He next spoke of the military situation and of the offensive Brussiloff was about to take. I subsequently started the subject of the railway administration, calling his attention to the congestion existing on the Siberian railway and to the necessity of completing the Murman railway with the least possible delay. His Majesty replied that he fully recognized the importance of relieving the congestion on the former line and that, as regarded the latter, he had told the Minister of Ways and Communications that, if it was not completed by the end of the year, he should entrust the control of its construction to other hands. The Emperor afterwards expressed his admiration of the splendid assistance rendered by our dominions and colonies, and proceeded to question me as to the further steps which we were likely to take

ILLUMINATED SCROLL CONFERRING ON ME THE FREEDOM OF MOSCOW

in the direction of Imperial Federation. Finally he spoke of the close economic understanding which he hoped to see established between Russia and Great Britain after the war. On my remarking that such an understanding would depend on whether the Russian industrials were prepared to renounce their idea of prohibitive duties on all foreign goods, the Emperor said that, as Russia could not be self-supporting for years to come, she ought to try to develop her industries with the help of British capital and British expert advice.

A few weeks later I again left Petrograd to fulfil a long-standing engagement to dine with the British colony at Moscow, to meet the mayor and the chief civil and military authorities of the town. It was at the close of this dinner that I was informed by M. Chelnokoff of the intention of the municipal Duma to elect me an honorary citizen of Moscow, an honour that had only been conferred on eight Russians and one foreigner before me.

On the following evening I was invited, together with my wife and secretary, " Benjy " Bruce, to attend an extraordinary sitting of the Duma. The council chamber into which we were ushered was a long room with tiers of raised benches at either end, filled on the one side by the deputies and on the other by the invited guests. The mayor and town councillors occupied seats at a table in the centre of the hall, facing the deputies, while we took our places with other notables on specially reserved chairs opposite the mayor. The proceedings opened with a discussion of certain municipal matters, and when these were disposed of I was invited to come and sit next to the mayor. M. Chelnokoff

then delivered a speech in Russian, in which he submitted my name for election "as a token of our sympathy for the great and valiant British nation and of the warmth of our feelings of friendship, as well as of our profound respect, for Moscow's honoured guest." The motion was voted by acclamation, and M. Chelnokoff, turning to me, inquired whether I accepted. I thereupon signified my acceptance in the prescribed formula in Russian. After shaking me warmly by the hand M. Chelnokoff presented me with a beautiful fifteenth-century icon of St. George and the Dragon as a gift from the town of Moscow. He concluded his speech by saying that a special chair, with my name inscribed on it, would always be reserved for me in the municipal council chamber as a lasting testimonial of my services and of the good understanding existing between our countries.

I then rose and replied as follows, in French:

C'est du fond du cœur que j'adresse à vous, Monsieur le Maire, et à vous, Messieurs les Conseillers Municipaux, mes plus chaleureux remerciements pour l'honneur insigne que la ville de Moscou vient de m'octroyer. C'est un honneur si inattendu, dont je me sens si peu digne, que je cherche en vain des paroles convenables pour exprimer les sentiments de profonde reconnaissance dont mon âme est remplie. Chaque fois que je m'approche de votre ancienne Capitale, couronnée comme elle l'est de l'auréole d'un si glorieux passé, j'y entre en pélérin se rendant à un lieu saint. Mais aujourd'hui vous me recevez non seulement comme le Représentant de mon Auguste Souverain, l'Ami et l'Allié du Votre, mais en concitoyen. Vous me prenez dans votre sein en inscrivant mon nom au régistre de votre ville, qui compte tant de noms illustres. Et puis vous me comblez en m'offrant cette belle et ancienne Ikône, qui a pour moi un prix tout

FIFTEENTH CENTURY IKON REPRESENTING
ST. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON

(*Given me by the City of Moscow*)

exceptionnel et personnel. St. Georges, ce Grand Saint, dont je suis fier de porter le nom, est à la fois Patron de Moscou et de l'Angleterre. Je vois dans ce fait un symbole de l'union étroite entre mon pays et Moscou—cœur de la Russie.

Quels souvenirs Moscou évoque du premier contacte établi entre la Russie et l'Angleterre ! Ce fut vers le milieu du 16me siècle que Richard Chancellor y est venu faire sa cour à votre grand mais terrible Tsar, Jean IV, et c'est de l'audience que Sa Majesté lui a accordée que date le commencement des relations d'amitié et de commerce entre nos deux pays. Moscou a été, pour ainsi dire, le berceau de l'Entente Anglo-Russe. Puis, lorsque deux siècles et demi plus tard la Russie et la Grande Bretagne se trouvaient alliées contre le grand génie, qui a voulu subjuguer le monde, quel sacrifice sublime Moscou a fait pour le vaincre ! Ce fut Moscou qui alors lui a crié " Halte ! " et qui lui a porté le premier des coups qui ont amené sa chute. Et maintenant que la Grande Bretagne et la Russie sont de nouveau alliées et qu'elles se battent, côte à côte avec la vaillante France, contre un ennemi redoutable, qui n'a rien de commun avec Napoléon sauf une ambition effrénée, Moscou fait preuve du même esprit de patriotisme que par le passé et ne recule devant aucun sacrifice pour abattre l'Allemagne.

C'est dans un pareil moment que Moscou me donne le droit de cité ! Je m'incline, tout confus de l'honneur qu'elle me fait, en réitérant mes remerciements les plus sincères. Je garderai, Messieurs, un souvenir inoubliable de la journée d'aujourd'hui. Je tâcherai de me rendre digne du droit que j'ai de m'appeler citoyen de votre belle et glorieuse ville. C'est un nouveau lien qui m'attache à la Russie et c'est un nouveau et précieux témoignage des sentiments d'amitié et de sympathie envers mon pays, dont Moscou a donné à maintes reprises de si généreuses preuves.

My speech, which was translated into Russian by M. Chelnokoff, was received with loud cheers, and, after being presented to all the members of the Duma,

I was conducted to an adjoining room where tea was served at round tables. There another surprise awaited me. On taking my place at one of them I found a massive Russian drinking bowl, shaped like a helmet, confronting me, and on my admiring it I was told by my neighbour that the members of the Duma hoped that I would accept it as a personal gift from themselves, after they had had their names engraved on it. It was hardly to be wondered at that, after all these manifestations of friendship and sympathy for our country, I should have felt, as I told Chelnokoff when I took leave of him at the station, that my life's work had been crowned and that Anglo-Russian friendship was secured for all time.

This impression was confirmed by the many congratulatory telegrams which I received after my return to Petrograd. The Emperor, in a telegram addressed to Chelnokoff, ratified my election in the following words: "Moscow, always correctly interpreting the feelings of the Russian people, has rightly appraised the services of Sir George Buchanan in promoting a *rapprochement* between the British and Russian peoples, a *rapprochement* which to-day has been completed by a brotherhood of arms on the field of battle. I welcome the resolution of the Moscow municipal Duma electing the British Ambassador, Sir George Buchanan, a citizen of the city of Moscow."

The rector of the university telegraphed expressing his pleasure at my election, and saying that it formed a new link in the chain of friendship forged between Great Britain and Russia on the battlefield. He further announced my election as an honorary member of the University of Moscow.

SILVER DRINKING BOWL

(*Presented to me by the Members of the Moscow Duma*).

It is the replica of the helmet of the Prince of Novgorod, who fought against the Swedes and Germans in the Thirteenth Century and who was canonised after death as St. Alexander Nevski.

Among others, Count Serge Cheremeteff telegraphed as follows:

Maladie m'ayant empêché d'acclamer Votre Excellence à Moscou vous prie, comme Moscovite d'ancienne rôche, d'accepter l'expression de vive joie et de vraie satisfaction à tout Russe de pouvoir saluer en vous le citoyen honoraire de notre antique capitale.

The above telegrams will, I think, furnish a conclusive reply to those kind friends who, on my return to England in 1918, circulated a report to the effect that the Freedom of Moscow was the price paid me for the part which I had played in starting the Russian Revolution.

On November 25 a delegation from Moscow brought to the Embassy my charter of citizenship—a beautifully illuminated scroll recording the Duma's resolution, as well as the Emperor's telegram confirming my election—together with the silver goblet on which the names of the donors had been inscribed. In presenting them to me, M. Chelnokoff said:

Moscow has authorized me, dear Sir George, to convey to you her greetings and to say that her feelings of sympathy, respect and friendship for you have only grown and strengthened since our last sitting in the hall of the municipal Duma.

The political situation, unfortunately, had undergone such a change for the worse during the intervening months that I could no longer look forward to the future with the same confidence as at the time of my election.

CHAPTER XX

1916

ALMOST immediately after the opening of hostilities in August, 1914, the Emperor had recognized the expediency of considering the question of the reconstitution of Poland and of taking steps to secure the loyal co-operation of its inhabitants in the war, of which their country was about to become the theatre. With this object in view the Grand Duke Nicholas had, by His Majesty's orders, issued a manifesto to the Poles, foreshadowing the grant of a large measure of autonomy. This manifesto made an excellent impression, and the Russian troops, on first entering Galicia, met with a friendly reception on the part of the population. Unfortunately, the conciliatory policy thus initiated by the Emperor was not put into practice by those who were entrusted with the provincial administration of Galicia, and the sympathies of the Poles were alienated by their attempts to Russify everything Polish, as well as by the persistent efforts of Orthodox bishops to proselytize the population.

Sazonoff, who had from the first championed their cause, realized that it was to Russia's interest to satisfy their aspirations by proclaiming at once an autonomous constitution for a reconstructed Poland. In July, 1916, he succeeded, in spite of the opposition of his

reactionary colleagues, headed by Stürmer, in obtaining the Emperor's support for such a policy. According to the scheme submitted by Sazonoff, the future Polish Government was to consist of a viceroy, a council of Ministers and two chambers, with full administrative powers in all matters save the army, diplomacy, customs, strategic railways and common finance, which were to remain under the control of the Imperial Government. Stürmer, who was at Headquarters, fearing that he would be outvoted in the Council of Ministers summoned by the Emperor to examine the question, absented himself on the ground that he had to return to Petrograd. On July 13, as Paléologue and I were in conference with Neratoff, the Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sazonoff suddenly appeared, having just returned from Headquarters. He was triumphant: he had carried the day, and been charged by the Emperor with the task of drafting a manifesto proclaiming Polish autonomy. He was, he told us, leaving at once for Finland on a short holiday. Stürmer, however, had but *reculé pour mieux sauter*. He knew that he had a better chance of talking over the Emperor when he was alone with him than in the Council of Ministers, and he had returned to the Stavka for this purpose. He had also, in the meanwhile, secured the support of the Empress, who had never forgiven Sazonoff for having tried to prevent the Emperor assuming the supreme command, for having written the letter asking His Majesty to dismiss Goremykin, and for his well-known dislike of Rasputin.

On returning from a drive on the islands about ten o'clock on the evening of July 19, I found the Assistant

Foreign Minister waiting to see me at the Embassy. He had, he said, come to tell me that an Imperial ukase announcing Sazonoff's resignation was to be sent to the Stavka on the following day for the Emperor's signature, and that unless someone intervened the consequences might be very serious for the Allies, as Stürmer was certain to take his place. I asked Neratoff whether the object of his visit was to get me to intervene, adding that as it was too late to ask for an audience I did not quite see what I could do. Neratoff replied that my intervention in such a question as that of the Emperor's choice of his Foreign Minister might no doubt compromise my position, but that, if nothing was done, Stürmer's appointment would be an accomplished fact within twenty-four hours. He then left me.

After thinking the matter over I telephoned for my secretaries and addressed the following telegram to the Emperor, which I sent in cipher through General Hanbury Williams, our military representative at Headquarters :

Your Majesty has always allowed me to speak so frankly on all questions that either directly or indirectly affect the successful issue of the war and the conclusion of a treaty of peace that will guarantee the world against its renewal for years to come, that I venture humbly to approach Your Majesty on a matter which may, I fear, at a moment like the present, seriously increase the difficulties of the Allied Governments. In so doing I am acting entirely on my own initiative and responsibility, and I must crave Your Majesty's forgiveness for taking a step which is, I know, contrary to all diplomatic etiquette.

Persistent rumours have reached me that it is Your Majesty's intention to relieve M. Sazonoff of his duties as

Your Majesty's Minister for Foreign Affairs, and, as it is impossible for me to ask for an audience, I venture to appeal to Your Majesty to consider, before taking your final decision, the serious consequences which M. Sazonoff's retirement may have on the important negotiations at present proceeding with Roumania and on the still more urgent ones that are bound to arise as the war progresses.

M. Sazonoff and I have worked together for nearly six years to bring our two countries into closer contact, and I had always counted on his support to convert the alliance which had been cemented by this war into a lasting one. I cannot exaggerate the services which he has rendered the cause of the Allied Government by the tact and ability that he has shown in the very difficult negotiations which we have conducted since the war began. Nor can I conceal from Your Majesty the apprehensions which I feel at losing him as a collaborator in the work that still lies before us. Of course, I may be altogether mistaken, and it may be on account of ill-health that M. Sazonoff is about to retire, in which case I shall regret the cause of his departure all the more.

I would once again pray Your Majesty to forgive me for sending this personal message.

On the following day Hanbury Williams, who had often on previous occasions rendered me valuable assistance by his tactful treatment of the many delicate questions which he had to discuss at Headquarters, telegraphed to say that my message had been delivered to the Emperor and that he was hopeful of the results. Unfortunately the Empress had in the meanwhile arrived at the Stavka, and Sazonoff's fate was sealed. He was still in Finland when he received an autograph letter from the Emperor thanking him for his services and saying that, as their respective views differed on so many questions, it was better that they should part.

On the 22nd Sir E. Grey telegraphed to me as

follows : " Your action entirely approved. I am grateful to Your Excellency for having so promptly undertaken this responsibility." Two days later, in reply to a telegram which I had sent requesting permission to go to Finland for a few days' rest, and suggesting that I might at the same time inform Sazonoff that the King had been pleased to confer on him the G.C.B. in recognition of his services to the allied cause, he again telegraphed : " I entirely approve and trust you will take sufficient rest to re-establish your health completely, as your services are invaluable. I much appreciate the work you have done and are doing."

I had been careful to keep the fact of my having telegraphed to the Emperor a profound secret; but one of our postal bags, containing a private letter from Lord Hardinge, in which reference was made to this telegram, was subsequently seized by the Germans. I do not know whether it was in consequence of this discovery, or of my having been granted the Freedom of Moscow, but it was about this time that the Germans paid me the compliment of dubbing me " the uncrowned king of Russia."

It was Stürmer's appointment that first caused me to take a really serious view of the internal situation. Writing to the Foreign Office on August 18 I said :

> I can never hope to have confidential relations with a man on whose word no reliance can be placed, and whose only idea is to further his own ambitious ends. Though self-interest compels him to continue the foreign policy of his predecessor, he is, according to all accounts, a Germanophil at heart. As a pronounced reactionary, he is, moreover, at one with the Empress in wishing to maintain the autocracy intact. . . .

. . . If the Emperor continues to uphold his present reactionary advisers a revolution is, I fear, inevitable. The civil population has had enough of an administrative system which, in a country so rich as Russia is in natural resources, has, thanks to incompetence and bad organization, rendered it difficult for them to procure many of the first necessaries of life even at famine prices. The army, on the other hand, is not likely to forget or to forgive all it has suffered at the hands of the existing administration. Sazonoff's dismissal and Stürmer's appointment have made an immense impression on the country and on the army.

As a reactionary with pro-German sympathies, Stürmer had never viewed with favour the idea of an alliance with the democratic Governments of the West, for fear that it might serve as a channel through which liberal ideas might penetrate into Russia. He was, however, far too astute to advocate a separate peace with Germany. Such a suggestion would, he knew, never have been tolerated by either the Emperor or Empress, and would almost certainly have cost him his place. The same may be said of General Woyeikoff, the Prefect of the Imperial Palaces, whose special duty it was to see that the necessary measures were taken for the Emperor's protection. As he was in constant touch with His Majesty, he was used by the Empress as her mouthpiece, and in his conversations with the Emperor he always expressed her views with regard to Ministerial appointments and other questions of internal policy. But neither he nor any of the German clique at Court ever risked saying anything that was likely to be resented by Their Majesties. What they would have done, had they had the opportunity, was to work for a peace as favourable as possible to Germany, with a view to re-establishing the closest possible

understanding with that country. There were others who, like Woyeikoff's father-in-law, Count Frederichs, the Minister of the Court, and Count Benckendorff, the Grand Chamberlain, whose brother was so long Ambassador in London, were not pro-German.

In spite of his intimate relations with the German Court before the war, Count Frederichs, like Count Benckendorff, was a strong pro-Ally. A typical Russian grand seigneur of the old school, devoted to his Sovereign and having the good of his country at heart, he realized the danger of the course which the Emperor was steering and more than once tendered moderating counsels. Stürmer, on the other hand, in his frequent audiences with the Empress, knew that he was on safe ground when he opposed all concessions; but he was, at the same time, careful to veil his pro-German sympathies. Inordinately ambitious, his one idea was to retain office. He even seems to have hoped to play the rôle of a Nesselrode or a Gortchakoff, as, in one of our conversations, he suggested quite seriously that the future peace conference should be held at Moscow so that he might be called on to preside over its deliberations.

In his dealings with me Stürmer was always courteous and correct; but the fact that we both mistrusted each other made our relations somewhat strained. Some three weeks after he assumed charge of the Foreign Office I had a serious passage of arms with him. A reactionary journal, which I had reason to believe was inspired by those in his *entourage*, had published an outrageous attack on the British army, declaring, among other things, that it had only advanced two hundred yards in the course of two years. I pro-

tested to Stürmer that it was monstrous that such an article should have been passed by the censor, and demanded a public retraction and apology on the part of the writer—a certain Boulatzel. Stürmer demurred, saying that he was powerless in the matter. I insisted, and he eventually said that he would send Boulatzel to see me. I told the latter, when he called, what I thought of him and his paper; but it took me over an hour to force him to publish a refutation which I had prepared for communication to the Press. Later in the day Stürmer telephoned asking me to tone down this statement, but I only consented to omit one phrase which might, I feared, have wounded the feelings of our friends in the Russian army.

In October I paid my one and only visit to the Emperor's Headquarters at Mohileff. I had a few weeks previously been instructed to inform the Minister of Marine that the King desired to confer the G.C.B. on the admiral in command of the Baltic fleet as a compliment to the Russian navy. Admiral Grigorowitch had objected that the commander-in-chief of the Baltic fleet was on a par with the commander-in-chief of the Black Sea fleet, and that to confer a decoration on the one without conferring it on the other would create an invidious distinction. I had therefore suggested that the Emperor, as commander-in-chief of all Russia's land and sea forces, should be asked to accept the G.C.B. as a mark of the King's appreciation of the services rendered by his navy. This suggestion was adopted, and the Emperor, on being sounded, sent me a warm message of acceptance inviting me to come to the Stavka with as many of my staff as I liked to bring as soon as I received the insignia. A second

and still more pressing message reached me a few days later. As soon, therefore, as the insignia arrived, I requested Stürmer to ascertain which day it would suit His Majesty to receive me. Stürmer, who did not relish the idea of my seeing the Emperor alone, at once said that, as he was himself going to the Stavka in a few days' time, he would arrange that we should go there together. I replied that I should have liked nothing better, but that, as the Emperor had given me to understand that I was to come at once, I must ask him to take His Majesty's orders without further delay. The reply was as I had forecasted, and as he could not himself be present at my audience, Stürmer took other steps to put spokes in my wheel.

I went to Mohileff on October 18, accompanied by General Knox and Captain Grenfell, our military and naval attachés, and by Bruce, the head of the chancellery. The Emperor received us at once in a short private audience, and after I had in an appropriate speech presented him with the insignia of a Knight Grand Cross of the Military Division of the Bath, His Majesty kept us talking for about ten minutes. The Empress, who had arrived with her daughters a few days previously, did not attend the luncheon that followed our audience. Instead of sitting next the Emperor, as was usual on such an official occasion, I was placed between the Grand Duchess Olga and one of her sisters, so that I could not possibly talk to His Majesty. After luncheon an informal circle was held, but as General Hanbury Williams had told me that the Emperor would be sure to ask me to come and talk to him in his study, I did not try to approach him. After conversing with several of his other guests, His Majesty

came up to me and thanked me warmly for having come.

When he was on the point of bidding me good-bye I ventured to interrupt him by saying that there were one or two things about which I wished to speak to him. On receiving permission to do so, I said that His Majesty would shortly be receiving the Japanese Ambassador in farewell audience on his appointment as Minister for Foreign Affairs at Tokio. Viscount Motono was very well disposed towards Russia, and His Majesty might with advantage try to enlist his powerful influence on Russia's behalf. Japan had already furnished the Russian army with guns and munitions, and it was just possible that she might be induced to send a contingent of troops to the Russian front were she to be offered some substantial compensation. While approving this idea in principle, the Emperor asked whether I had any suggestion to make with regard to the nature of the compensation. I replied that I had no definite proposal to make, but that I rather gathered from a remark which Viscount Motono had made in one of our recent conversations that the cession of the Russian or northern half of Saghalien would be very acceptable to his Government. The Emperor at once said that this was quite out of the question, as he could not cede a foot of Russian territory. I ventured to remind His Majesty of Henri IV's famous saying—"*Paris vaut bien une messe*"—but without success. As I saw that the Emperor was not quite at his ease, I did not try to prolong the conversation, and concluded by inquiring whether His Majesty proposed returning shortly to Tsarskoe. "Yes," replied the Emperor. "I hope to be there in a few weeks' time,

and I shall be very glad to see you. We can then have a long talk."

Stürmer and his powerful friends at Court, who suspected me of working against them, had been careful to arrange matters so that I should have no private conversation with the Emperor. But what surprised me most, after His Majesty's warm messages of appreciation of the compliment paid his navy, was the fact that he did not, as was customary, either propose the King's health or wear the Star of the Bath at luncheon.

That Stürmer was afraid of my using such influence as I possessed with the Emperor in a sense hostile to himself was evidenced by his change of tactics when I applied a few weeks later for my promised audience. I happened to be dining with him to meet Viscount Motono, the retiring Japanese Ambassador, on the evening of the day on which I had written to tell him that the Emperor had expressed a wish to see me on his return to Tsarskoe. Much to my surprise, I was on this occasion accorded, for the first time, a most flattering reception both by my host and hostess. On my admiring the flowers on the dinner table the Empress asked me which of them I liked best, and the two plants which I had innocently selected were sent the next morning to the Embassy. After dinner Stürmer came up to me and said: "*Vous voyez, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, que vos appréhensions au sujet de la nomination de Monsieur B.*"—a pronounced Germanophil against whose appointment to a high post in the Foreign Office I had recently protested—"*n'étaient pas fondées.*" "I should," he proceeded to say, "deeply regret were anything that I did not to meet with your approval. My one great wish is that we should always

work together on the most intimate and confidential terms, and that you should for many years to come continue to represent your Sovereign at Petrograd."

I had, as a matter of fact, been asked by two members of the Imperial family to try to induce the Emperor to part with Stürmer on the ground that he did not command the confidence of the Allied Governments and to sound His Majesty as to the possibility of Sazonoff's return. It had been my intention to do this; but I had been warned by Neratoff, the Assistant Foreign Minister, that it would be premature to raise the question. I confined myself, therefore, in my audience to dwelling on the increase of German influence, on the anti-British campaign, and on the gravity of the internal situation. If, I told the Emperor, I had taken such strong action with regard to Boulatzel's attack on the British army, it was because I knew that his paper was subsidized by a powerful anti-British clique. It was not only in Petrograd, but in Moscow and in other towns, that this campaign was being carried on, and I had reason to believe that German sympathizers in Russia were working for a peace that would be favourable to Germany, and trying to persuade the public that Russia had nothing to gain by continuing the war. The Emperor replied that people who held such language when several Russian provinces were still in enemy occupation were traitors. After reminding me that he had at the beginning of the war declared that he would never make peace so long as there was a single enemy soldier on Russian soil, he said that nothing would make him spare Germany when the time for peace negotiations came. Moscow, he added, had given a signal proof of Russia's

feelings for Great Britain by electing me an honorary citizen, and I need not be anxious.

On my asking whether he had ever considered the question of the rectification of Russia's frontiers on the side of Germany, His Majesty replied that he was afraid that he would have to be content with his present frontier, bad as it was. The Germans would have to be driven out of Poland, but a Russian advance into Germany would entail too heavy sacrifices. His idea had always been to create a united Poland, under Russia's protection, as a buffer state between Germany and Russia; but he saw no prospect at present of including Posen in it. I next ventured to ask whether it was true that, in the interview which Protopopoff had had with a German agent at Stockholm, the latter had stated that, if Russia would make peace, Germany would evacuate Poland and raise no objection to Russia's acquisition of Constantinople. The Emperor replied that he could not quite remember whether the above statement had been made to Protopopoff or not, but that he had certainly read it in a report from one of his agents. I might, he added, rest assured that such an offer would carry no weight with him.

I then proceeded to speak of the profound discontent prevailing all over the country owing to the shortage of food supplies, and of the disturbances that had already taken place in Petrograd. The Minister of Ways and Communications had, I said, recently told me that the parties of the Left were trying to exploit the situation in order to squeeze political concessions out of the Government; but much as I liked and respected M. Trepoff, I could not agree with the view which he took of this question. It was not a

political one in the strict sense of that word, nor was it a movement in favour of constitutional reform. I trusted that the authorities would not have recourse to repressive measures, as the discontent was caused by the knowledge that, in a country so rich as Russia, the working classes could not obtain the first necessaries of life in consequence of the incompetence of the administration. I could not, either, conceal from His Majesty the fact that, according to reports which I had received from our consuls, the peasantry, who had always regarded their Emperor as infallible, were beginning to lose faith in him and that the autocracy was losing ground, thanks to his Ministers' shortcomings.

The Emperor, who looked somewhat embarrassed while I was speaking, questioned me about the Petrograd strikes; but I was not in a position to give him any precise data as to what had actually happened when the troops had been called out. The food question, he admitted, was becoming very serious, but the Ministers of the Interior, of Agriculture, and of Ways and Communications, who were taking the matter in hand, would, he believed, be able to cope with it. He passed over in silence my allusions to the incompetence of the administration and, after keeping me for an hour and a half, bade me good-bye in his usual friendly manner.

CHAPTER XXI

1916

THE following extract from a letter which I wrote to the Foreign Office on October 18 will show how German influence was spreading :

I do not wish to be ultra-pessimistic, but never since the war began have I felt so depressed about the situation here, more especially with regard to the future of Anglo-Russian relations. German influence has been making headway ever since Sazonoff left the Foreign Office. The Germans, who during the early stages of the war, and even up to a quite recent date, were proclaiming through their agents that we were making Russia bear all the brunt of the fighting, have changed their tactics. They are now representing Great Britain, with her navy and her new armies, as the future world power, bent on prolonging the war for her own inordinate ambitions.

" It is Great Britain," they keep on repeating, " that is forcing Russia to continue the war and forbidding her to accept the favourable peace terms which Germany is ready to offer, and it is Great Britain, therefore, that is responsible for the privations and sufferings of her people." . . .

The losses which Russia has suffered are so colossal that the whole country is in mourning. So many lives have been uselessly sacrificed in the recent unsuccessful attacks against Kovel and other places, that the impression is gaining ground that it is useless continuing the struggle, and that Russia, unlike Great Britain, has nothing to gain by prolonging the war. This insidious campaign is much more difficult to meet than the old lies about our former inaction.

Hugh Walpole, who is, as you know, doing such excellent work at our information bureau, is greatly preocupied by all that he hears, and has asked me to publish some statement to counteract the effect of this German propaganda.

Early in November the Anglo-Russian Society, which had just been reconstituted, held its inaugural meeting under the presidency of M. Rodzianko at the municipal Duma. As I had to speak I took the opportunity of showing how the German party in Russia was endeavouring to poison the mind of the public against Great Britain; how they were representing us as having dragged Russia into the war; how they were accusing us of prolonging it in order that we might dominate the world and exploit Russia; and, after pointing out that all these lies were being circulated for the purpose of undermining our alliance and of paving the way for a premature peace, I concluded by saying: "It is not only on the battlefields of Europe that the war must be fought out to a victorious end. The final victory must also be won over the more insidious enemy within our gates."

The Duma met a few days later and Miliukoff, in an historic speech, denounced Stürmer as a traitor, while Puriskevitch, who but two years before had been an ultra reactionary, called on Ministers in impassioned language to throw themselves on their knees before the Emperor, to tell him that things could not go on as they were, and to beseech him to liberate Russia from Rasputin and from all the occult influences which were governing and betraying her. In a letter which I wrote to the Foreign Office on November 16 I said:

The inaugural meeting of our new Anglo-Russian Society last week was a great success, and my speech has had a very good Press both here and at Moscow. At the Duma yesterday Great Britain was specially signalled out for applause, and, as someone remarked, it was "an English day." This morning, when we were discussing the question of the publication of our Constantinople agreement, Stürmer said to Paléologue, who had received no instructions on the subject: "You saw what a *chaleureuse ovation* your British colleague had in the Duma yesterday! It was probably owing to their having heard that His Majesty's Government have agreed to Russia having Constantinople." I cannot imagine why he said this, as he knows quite well that the reason of the demonstration in our favour was the fact that we have been made the subject of attack by the pro-German party in this country.

When Paléologue and I got up to go, Stürmer asked me to remain. After telling me that he proposed taking legal proceedings against Miliukoff for the speech in which the latter had accused him of treason, he called my attention to the two following passages in that speech:

"In order to disclose all the ways and means of the German propaganda, about which we were recently told in such outspoken language by Sir G. Buchanan, we should have to have a legal investigation. . . .

. . . "That is why I was not surprised to hear from the lips of the British Ambassador a weighty accusation against that coterie of persons of wishing to prepare the way for a separate peace."

He then inquired whether Miliukoff had said this with my permission, as otherwise he had had no business to name me. I replied that I had not spoken to Miliukoff since I made my speech, but that I could not take exception to his referring to what I had said at a meeting at which he had been present. I had been obliged to reply in that speech to attacks made on my country, and I had but repeated textually what was being said about Great Britain both in Petrograd and Moscow. Stürmer pretended that he had not seen my speech, and asked who were the leaders of the anti-

British campaign. On my saying that this was exactly what I was trying to ascertain, he begged me to let him know if I discovered anything about them. . . .

If there is trouble, the troops, I am told, will refuse to fire. The trouble, if it comes, will be due to economic rather than to political causes, and it will begin, not with the workmen in the factories, but with the crowds waiting in the cold and snow outside the provision shops.

Stürmer fell before the storm—which he had raised—broke. During a short visit which the Emperor had paid her at Kieff, the Empress Marie had spoken to him so seriously about the political outlook that, on returning to the Stavka at the end of November, His Majesty decided to part with him. The Empress Alexandra, whose intervention Stürmer had invoked, tried but failed to save him. She succeeded, nevertheless, in stopping any radical change of policy. Her Majesty, unfortunately, was under the impression that it was her mission to save Russia. She believed—and, in principle, as subsequent events have shown, she was not altogether wrong—that the autocracy was the only régime that could hold the Empire together. The Emperor, she knew, was weak, and she therefore preached firmness. He must, she repeatedly told him, be an autocrat in deed as well as in name. In her desire to help him and to relieve him of some of the burden of his double rôle of autocrat and commander-in-chief, she assumed an active part in the government of the country, and in advocating, as she did, a policy of "Thorough," she was honestly convinced that she was acting in Russia's interests. She was so obsessed with the idea that there must be no weakening of the autocracy that she was opposed to all concessions,

while she encouraged the Emperor to choose his Ministers more out of regard for their political opinions than for their qualifications for office.

The weaker will yielded to the stronger, and the Emperor was entirely under her influence. But woefully mistaken as she was, the Empress was throughout inspired by the best of motives—love of her husband and love of her adopted country. The same cannot, however, be said of the little band of unscrupulous and self-seeking adventurers who, in their turn, influenced Her Majesty, using her as their unconscious agent to further their own political ends and ambitions. It was to Rasputin more especially that she looked for guidance before tending advice to the Emperor; and as her health failed her—for, what with the strain of the war, anxiety about her son, and the overtaxing of her strength in hospital work, she had fallen into a nervous neurotic state—she came more and more under his baneful influence.

Stürmer was succeeded as President of the Council by Trepoff, the Minister of Ways and Communications, who, though a reactionary, was in favour of reasonable reforms, while Pokrowski was appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs. The latter, a broad-minded, honourable, intelligent man of moderate views and a recognized authority on financial and economic questions, proved himself an excellent Minister. But, satisfactory as were these and one or two other minor appointments, no Government of which Protopopoff was a member could hope to work in harmony with the Duma. Belonging to the Octobrist, or moderate Liberal party, Protopopoff had been Vice-President of the Duma and had headed the delegation

from that chamber and the Council of Empire which had visited France and England earlier in the year. On his return journey he had had an interview with a German financier named Warburg, at Stockholm, that had seriously compromised him. His explanations failed to satisfy the Duma, and finding that he had lost all hold on that chamber, he determined to throw in his lot with the Court party. He made friends with Rasputin and Pitirim, and as in an audience, which he had had to report on the delegation's visit to London and Paris, his ingratiating manners had made a favourable impression on the Emperor and Empress, he was through their influence appointed Minister of the Interior. Never altogether normal, his unbalanced mind had been turned by his sudden rise to power, and he embarked on an ultra-reactionary policy which, coupled with the fact of his being a political renegade, made him the *bête noire* of the Duma. Trepoff, who was aware of this, had, on his appointment to the Presidency of the Council, tried to persuade the Emperor to dismiss Protopopoff, and would have succeeded had not the Empress intervened. He then tendered his resignation, but His Majesty declined to accept it.

On December 2—the eve of the sitting of the Duma at which Trepoff was to make his declaration of policy —Protopopoff came to see me. He began by complaining of the way in which his former friends, and more especially Rodzianko, were giving him the cold shoulder without, however, ever telling him what he had done to merit such treatment. The Emperor, he proceeded to say, had expressed the wish that he should remain, and it was his duty to obey His Majesty's

commands. He would, he knew, be attacked in the Duma, but he was not afraid. He would answer his accusers. It was, nevertheless, a great pity that, at a moment like the present, the members of the Duma should be quarrelling among themselves. Could I not, he asked, use my influence with Rodzianko to induce him to discourage personal attacks on him? I replied that as the Duma was meeting on the following day I should have no opportunity of seeing Rodzianko. I could tell him, however, that I had quite recently, in conversation both with members of the Government and with members of the Duma, emphasized the necessity of their laying aside party and personal differences and of all working together for the common good.

The opening sitting of the Duma was a very stormy one, and Trepoff, who was received with hoots and hisses, had to leave the tribune three times before he could obtain a hearing. I was much struck by his patience and forbearance, and felt that the Duma was making a great mistake and putting itself in the wrong. His declaration of policy was most satisfactory, and he was emphatic as to the necessity of fighting out the war to victory and of defeating the Germans at home as well as in the field. The chamber, however, continued hostile, and even the announcement, which the Allied Governments had authorized him to make with regard to the Constantinople Agreement, fell perfectly flat. The Duma and the public were so engrossed by the internal crisis that they could think of nothing else. The name of Trepoff was, moreover, so associated with the events of 1905 that the left regarded his appointment merely as a change of persons and not of systems, and would accept nothing at his hands. Protopopoff,

THE GRAND DUCHESS XENIA OF RUSSIA

(From a photograph kindly given me by Her Imperial Highness)

THE GRAND DUCHESS ELIZABETH (WIDOW OF GRAND DUKE SERGE)

(From a photograph in the possession of Sir Ian Malcolm)

who was made the subject of violent attacks, had not, after all, the courage to face the music. He retired instead to Headquarters, and on his return took to his bed and announced that he was seriously ill. He did, however, write a letter to the *Novoe Vremja* explaining that it was at the special request of the Russian Minister that the Stockholm interview had taken place —a statement that was proved to be a pure invention on his part.

Even the reactionary Council of Empire was almost as outspoken as the Duma in protesting against the occult influences at work in high places. The same note was struck at the Congress of the United Nobility, one of the most Conservative bodies in Russia, while in all parts of the Empire voices were raised in condemnation of the dark forces behind the throne which made and unmade Ministers. With the exception of the extremists Russia was once more united; but whereas at the beginning of the war she had rallied round the Emperor, an insuperable barrier had now arisen between Sovereign and people.

In December several members of the Imperial family tried to open the Empress's eyes to the true character of Rasputin and to the gravity of the situation. Among these was Her Majesty's elder sister, the Grand Duchess Elisabeth, who, ever since the assassination of her husband, the Grand Duke Serge, had lived retired from the world as the Superior of a little sisterhood which she had founded at Moscow, devoting her life to relieving the sufferings of the poor. Beautiful in person as in character, a ministering angel to all who were in distress, she came to Tsarskoe, determined to make a last effort to save the sister whom she

loved. But the Empress's faith in the man whom she regarded as God's chosen instrument was not to be shaken, and after listening impatiently to what the Grand Duchess had to say, she cut short the conversation. The two sisters parted to meet no more.

A little later the Grand Duchess Victoria, the wife of the Grand Duke Cyril, made another attempt. She did not mention Rasputin by name, but after speaking very openly about the general situation, she appealed to the Empress to change her attitude for the sake both of the Emperor and the dynasty. Her Majesty was quite nice to the Grand Duchess, but told her that the situation required firmness and that she was not going to let the Emperor yield any more. It was to the interest of the dynasty that she should be firm, and nothing would induce her to sacrifice Protopopoff. The army, she maintained, was not disaffected, but was, on the contrary, loyal to the Emperor. She then made a violent attack on Sazonoff, whose Polish policy she severely criticized, and concluded by saying that he was no friend to the Emperor. One of the reasons why the Empress believed to the last that the army and the peasantry were on her side, and that she could count on their support, was that Protopopoff was in the habit of having bogus telegrams despatched to her from all parts of the Empire, signed by fictitious persons, assuring her of their love and support.

After so many unsuccessful attempts to deliver Russia from the man who was generally regarded as her evil genius, Rasputin's position seemed unassailable. It was from an unexpected quarter that deliverance eventually came, and on the morning of December 30 Petrograd was roused by the news of

his assassination. The three chief actors in this historic drama were Prince Felix Yusupoff, Puriskevitch (the former reactionary who had led the attack on Rasputin at the opening sitting of the Duma), and the Grand Duke Dmitri. The latter's rôle was a purely passive one, his presence signifying apparently his approval of what they all three regarded as a judicial execution. Rasputin, who had been placed under special police protection, seems to have had a premonition of his danger, and it was with some difficulty that Prince Felix, who went to fetch him in his motor, persuaded him to come to supper at the Yusupoff Palace. There a Borgia-like repast, with poisoned cakes and poisoned wine, awaited him. Rasputin partook of both but was none the worse. After vainly waiting for the poison to work the Prince rose and, making some excuse, went up a little winding staircase to a room on the floor above, where the Grand Duke, Puriskevitch and a doctor were waiting. Borrowing the Grand Duke's revolver, he rejoined Rasputin and, as the latter was looking at an old crystal crucifix on one of the walls, shot him behind the left shoulder. Hearing the shot, the other three came down, and the doctor pronounced the death agony to have begun. They then went out to make arrangements for removing the body. But Rasputin was not dead. Raising himself up and throwing himself on Prince Felix as the latter, on returning to the dining-room, was bending over him, he managed to make his way through an adjoining passage to an outer court. Here he was shot dead by Puriskevitch. The body was then taken in a motor to the Kristovski island and dropped into the Neva through a hole in the ice. Owing to tracks of

blood left in the snow it was recovered the following morning. A few days later Rasputin was buried at night at Tsarskoe in the presence of the Emperor and Empress, of the Metropolitan Pitirim and Protopopoff.

Rasputin's death was a terrible blow to the Empress. All the hopes which she had centred on him were shattered, while the disasters which he had foretold would befall the dynasty should he be removed might, she feared, at any moment supervene. By her orders the Grand Duke Dmitri and Prince Felix were placed under arrest, though immunity from arrest was a recognized prerogative of all members of the Imperial family. The Emperor had returned at once from the Stavka and had told the Grand Duke Paul, who had asked that his son might be allowed to come to his palace at Tsarskoe, that "the Empress cannot allow it at present." A few days later the Grand Duke Dmitri was deported to Persia, while Prince Felix Yusupoff was ordered to retire to his estates near Moscow. On January 11 the members of the Imperial family met at the palace of the Grand Duchess Marie Pawlovna and signed a collective letter in which they petitioned the Emperor to pardon the Grand Duke Dmitri. They at the same time represented in respectful language the dangers with which His Majesty's internal policy was fraught both for Russia and the dynasty. They received the following crushing reply: "It is given to nobody to occupy himself with murder. I know that the conscience of many gives them no rest, as it is not only Dmitri Pavlovitch who is implicated. I am astonished that you should address yourselves to me."

Rasputin's assassination, though prompted by patriotic motives, was a fatal mistake. It made the

[Photo: E.N.A

GREGORY RASPUTIN

Freely translated, Rasputin's writing on the photograph reads:
"What of to-morrow? Thou art guided by God, however full of thorns are the paths of life."

Empress more determined than ever to be firm, and it set a dangerous example, for it prompted people to translate their thoughts into action. It rendered it, besides, more difficult for the Emperor to make concessions even had he been disposed to do so, as he would in that case have exposed himself to the suspicion of having yielded out of fear of assassination. According to Rodzianko and others, His Majesty was really much relieved to be rid of Rasputin, but I cannot say whether or not this was the case. At the end of the year the internal situation was about as bad as it could be, as the prevailing discontent had been increased by the prohibition of the meeting of the Union of Zemstvos at Moscow and by the adjournment of the Duma in order to prevent any further discussion of that prohibition.

The change of Government which had recently taken place in England had not made a favourable impression in Petrograd, and the Empress, as one of the Grand Duchesses told me, had spoken very disparagingly of some of its members. I tried to correct this impression in a speech which I made at the British Club on New Year's Eve, pointing out that when a country is engaged in a life and death struggle it must entrust its destinies to men who have the necessary brain power and energy to prosecute it with vigour and success, though I had but little hope of this lesson being taken to heart by the rulers of Russia. Of the Ministerial changes in England the one that most interested political and official circles in Petrograd was the retirement of Viscount Grey, as Sir Edward had now become. During his long term of office he had done so much to promote and maintain a close under-

standing with Russia; he had rendered her so many services during the critical years that preceded the war, and during the war itself he had shown such readiness to meet her wishes, that his departure from the Foreign Office meant for Russia the loss of a friend. He had, moreover, won for himself such a commanding position among the statesmen of Europe; his word carried such weight; his strong and upright character, as well as his able conduct of affairs, inspired such confidence, that it was generally felt that the Entente was losing in him one of its most valued assets. No one felt his loss more than I did, who had served under him for over ten years. He was an ideal chief, taking one completely into his confidence, listening to one's suggestions, showing consideration for one's difficulties and encouraging one to persevere by his kindly appreciation of one's work. In his last letter to me, written on December 24, 1916, he wrote:

> I had not time to write private letters while I was in office, but I do not want to quit it without telling you how much I appreciated and admired the way in which you have handled the relations with Russia. It has been an immense help to the public service. I think even the public realizes something of it from the demonstrations there have been in Russia. But only those who have been behind the scenes here and at Petrograd know how much you have done and what the difficulties have been. When the war ends well I hope that it will be possible to tell the country more of this and to get fuller recognition for it.

CHAPTER XXII

1917

AT the beginning of January, Trepoff, finding that it was impossible to carry on the Government so long as Protopopoff remained Minister of the Interior, tendered his resignation, which was accepted by the Emperor. The Duma was adjourned till the end of February, and Prince Golitzin, a member of the Extreme Right, was appointed President of the Council. Honest and well-meaning, but without any administrative experience and out of touch with the Duma, he had not the necessary energy or strength of character to cope with a situation that was every day becoming more threatening. Revolution was in the air, and the only moot point was whether it would come from above or from below. A Palace revolution was openly spoken of, and at a dinner at the Embassy a Russian friend of mine, who had occupied a high position in the Government, declared that it was a mere question whether both the Emperor and Empress or only the latter would be killed. On the other hand, a popular outbreak, provoked by the prevailing food shortage, might occur at any moment.

I had no excuse for asking for an audience, but I did not like to await the development of events without making one last effort to save the Emperor, in spite of himself. In order to give greater weight to the

language which I proposed to hold, I asked for permission to speak in the name of the King and His Majesty's Government, instead of making, as on former occasions, purely personal representations. I was informed, in reply, that owing to the King being absent from London, His Majesty's orders could not be taken, and that, as the Emperor was as well acquainted with the state of affairs in his country as I was, no good could come from such action on my part. I did not share this view, as the Emperor and Empress were, unfortunately, kept in ignorance of the true feelings of their people. I therefore replied that the crisis through which Russia was passing was fraught with such untold dangers that I must ask His Majesty's Government to reconsider their decision. We owed it, I said, to the Emperor, who had always been such a loyal friend and ally; we owed it to Russia, who had made such sacrifices in the common cause; and we owed it to ourselves, who were so directly interested, to endeavour to avert those dangers. If His Majesty's Government would not authorize me to speak in their name, I was prepared, with their permission, to speak in my own name and to assume all the responsibility for doing so. This permission was eventually given me.

While awaiting a reply to my request for an audience I called on the President of the Duma, in order to ascertain what concessions would really satisfy that chamber. Rodzianko assured me that all that the Duma asked for was the appointment as President of the Council of a man who commanded the confidence both of the Emperor and of the nation, with a free hand to choose his colleagues in the Government.

On January 12—the day eventually fixed—I pro-

ceeded to Tsarskoe in a special train, accompanied by one of the Imperial chamberlains, and was on arrival shown into one of the large reception rooms, where I remained some little time in conversation with several of the high officers of the Court. As I was looking out of one of the windows I saw the Emperor leaving the palace and taking a brisk walk in the snow, as was often his habit between audiences. On his return, some ten minutes later, I was conducted to his presence. On all previous occasions His Majesty had received me informally in his study, and, after asking me to sit down, had produced his cigarette case and asked me to smoke. I was, therefore, disagreeably surprised at being ushered this time into the audience chamber and at finding His Majesty awaiting me there, standing in the middle of the room. I at once realized that he had divined the object of my audience, and that he was purposely giving it a strictly official character as a hint to me not to touch on matters outside an Ambassador's province. My heart, I confess, sank within me, and for a moment I seriously contemplated renouncing my original purpose. In these democratic days, when Emperors and Kings are at a discount, such nervousness on my part may seem out of place. But the Emperor of all the Russias was then an autocrat, whose slightest wish was law; and I was about not only to disregard the hint which he had so plainly given me, but to put myself in the wrong by overstepping the bounds of an Ambassador's sphere of action.

His Majesty began the conversation by expressing the deep regret with which he had that morning received the news of the death of Count Benckendorff, who had done so much to promote Anglo-Russian

friendship. He would, he said, be very difficult to replace; but he mentioned Sazonoff, whose appointment was announced a few weeks later, as an Ambassador likely to prove agreeable to His Majesty's Government. Speaking next of the importance of the Allied Conference that was about to meet at Petrograd, His Majesty expressed the hope that it would be the last one which we should have to hold before the final peace conference. I replied that I saw but little chance of its proving to be the precursor of the peace conference, as the political situation in Russia did not encourage me to expect any great results from its deliberations. I could not, indeed, help asking myself whether, under present circumstances, it was worth while exposing the lives of so many distinguished men to the fate that had befallen Lord Kitchener on his ill-starred journey to Russia.

On His Majesty asking why I took so pessimistic a view of the conference's prospects, I said that, even if it succeeded in establishing closer co-ordination between the Allied Governments, we had no guarantee that the present Russian Government would remain in office or that the decisions of the conference would be respected by their successors. As His Majesty protested that such apprehensions were unfounded, I explained that co-ordination of our efforts would not suffice unless there was in each of the Allied countries complete solidarity between all classes of the population. We had recognized this fact in England, and it was to secure the collaboration of the working classes that Mr. Lloyd George had included a representative of Labour in his small War Cabinet. In Russia it was very different, and His Majesty, I feared,

did not realize how important it was that we should present a united front to the enemy, not only collectively as allies, but individually as nations. "But I and my people," interjected the Emperor, "are united in our determination to win the war." "But not," I replied, "as regards the competence of the men whom Your Majesty has entrusted with the conduct of the war. Does Your Majesty," I asked, "wish me to speak with my usual frankness?"

On the Emperor signifying his assent, I went on to say that there was now a barrier between him and his people, and that if Russia was still united as a nation it was in opposing his present policy. The people, who had rallied so splendidly round their Sovereign on the outbreak of war, had seen how hundreds of thousands of lives had been sacrificed on account of the lack of rifles and munitions; how, owing to the incompetence of the administration, there had been a severe food crisis, and—much to my surprise, the Emperor himself added, "a breakdown of the railways." All that they wanted, I continued, was a Government that would carry on the war to a victorious finish. The Duma, I had reason to know, would be satisfied if His Majesty would but appoint as President of the Council a man in whom both he and the nation could have confidence, and would allow him to choose his own colleagues. The Emperor, while passing over this suggestion, referred by way of justification to certain changes which he had recently made in the Ministry. I therefore ventured to observe that His Majesty had of late changed his Ministers so often that Ambassadors never knew whether the Ministers of to-day with whom they were treating would still be Ministers on the morrow.

"Your Majesty, if I may be permitted to say so, has but one safe course open to you—namely, to break down the barrier that separates you from your people and to regain their confidence." Drawing himself up and looking hard at me, the Emperor asked: "Do you mean that *I* am to regain the confidence of my people or that they are to regain *my* confidence?" "Both, sir," I replied, "for without such mutual confidence Russia will never win this war. Your Majesty was admirably inspired when you went to the Duma last February. Will you not go there again? Will you not speak to your people? Will you not tell them that Your Majesty, who is the father of your people, wishes to work with them to win the war? You have, sir, but to lift up your little finger, and they will once more kneel at your feet as I saw them kneel, after the outbreak of war, at Moscow."

I had in the course of our conversation referred to the necessity of having a strong man at the head of the Government, and the Emperor now seized on this remark, saying that the situation undoubtedly required firmness and a strong man to deal with it. I told His Majesty that I entirely agreed, provided always that that firmness was not applied to enforce repressive measures or to obstruct the admirable work being done by the Zemstvos. While expressing his appreciation of the services rendered by the Zemstvos during the war, the Emperor said that he disapproved of the attitude and political speeches of some of their leaders. I tried to defend them on the ground that if they had erred it was through excess of patriotism, but without much success.

I next called His Majesty's attention to the attempts

being made by the Germans, not only to create dissension between the Allies, but to estrange him from his people. Their agents, I said, were everywhere at work. They were pulling the strings, and were using as their unconscious tools those who were in the habit of advising His Majesty as to the choice of his Ministers. They indirectly influenced the Empress through those in her *entourage*, with the result that, instead of being loved, as she ought to be, Her Majesty was discredited and accused of working in German interests. The Emperor once more drew himself up and said: "I choose my Ministers myself, and do not allow anyone to influence my choice." "How, then," I ventured to ask, "does Your Majesty select them?" "By making inquiries," His Majesty replied, "as to the qualifications of those whom I consider most fitted to conduct the affairs of the different Ministries." "Your Majesty's inquiries," I rejoined, "are not, I fear, always attended with success. There is, for example, M. Protopopoff, who, if Your Majesty will forgive my saying so, is bringing Russia to the verge of ruin. So long as he remains Minister of the Interior there cannot be that collaboration between the Government and the Duma which is an essential condition of victory."

"I chose M. Protopopoff," the Emperor here interposed, "from the ranks of the Duma in order to be agreeable to them—and this is my reward!" "But sir," I said, "the Duma can hardly place confidence in a man who has betrayed his party for office, who has had an interview with a German agent at Stockholm, and who is suspected of working for a reconciliation with Germany." "M. Protopopoff," His Majesty declared, "is not a pro-German, and the reports

circulated about his Stockholm interview have been grossly exaggerated." "I was not," I replied, "acquainted with what had passed in that interview. But, even admitting that the charges brought against him on that count had been exaggerated, he had told a deliberate falsehood in announcing in the Press that it was at the special request of the Russian Minister at Stockholm that he had seen the German in question." The Emperor did not attempt to deny this.

Did His Majesty, I then asked, realize the dangers of the situation, and was he aware that revolutionary language was being held, not only in Petrograd, but throughout Russia? On the Emperor saying that he was quite aware that people were indulging in such talk, but that I made a mistake in taking it too seriously, I told him that a week before Rasputin's assassination I had heard that an attempt was about to be made on his life. I had treated this report as idle gossip, but it had, after all, proved true. I could not, therefore, now turn a deaf ear to the reports which had reached me of assassinations, said to be contemplated of certain exalted personages. If such assassinations once began, there was no saying where they would stop. Repressive measures would, no doubt, be taken, and the Duma would be dissolved. Were that to happen, I should abandon all hope of Russia.

"Your Majesty," I concluded, "must remember that the people and the army are but one, and that in the event of revolution only a small portion of the army can be counted on to defend the dynasty. An Ambassador, I am well aware, has no right to hold the language which I have held to Your Majesty, and I

had to take my courage in both hands before speaking as I have done. I can but plead as my excuse the fact that I have throughout been inspired by my feelings of devotion for Your Majesty and the Empress. If I were to see a friend walking through a wood on a dark night along a path which I knew ended in a precipice, would it not be my duty, sir, to warn him of his danger? And is it not equally my duty to warn Your Majesty of the abyss that lies ahead of you? You have, sir, come to the parting of the ways, and you have now to choose between two paths. The one will lead you to victory and a glorious peace—the other to revolution and disaster. Let me implore Your Majesty to choose the former. By following it you will, sir, secure for your country the realization of its secular ambitions and for yourself the position of the most powerful Sovereign in Europe. But above all else, Your Majesty will assure the safety of those who are so dear to you and be free from all anxiety on their account."

The Emperor was visibly moved by the warmth which I had put into this appeal, and, pressing my hand as he bade me good-bye, said, "I thank you, Sir George."

M. Bark, the Minister of Finance, who had an audience immediately afterwards, asked me the next day what I had said to the Emperor, as he had never seen him so nervous and agitated. His Excellency had handed His Majesty a letter tendering his resignation, and the Emperor had torn it up, saying, "This is no time for Ministers to abandon their posts." But whatever momentary impression I may have made was not strong enough to counterbalance the adverse influence of the Empress, whose displeasure I had already

incurred on account of the language which I had held in previous audiences. So much was this the case that, according to a current report, the question of asking for my recall was seriously considered. That the Empress did not forgive those, who tried to dissuade the Emperor from giving effect to her policy, was evidenced by the case of my friend, the Grand Duke Nicholas Michaelowich. We had frequently exchanged views on the internal situation, in the hope that by our concerted action we might induce the Emperor to change his attitude. His Imperial Highness had, early in January, both by letter and by word of mouth, warned the Emperor of the dangers of the present course. Two days after my audience I received the following letter from him :

Ce 1/14. 1, 1917.

Pour vous seul.

BIEN CHER AMBASSADEUR,—J'ai reçu l'ordre dc S. M. l'Empereur de m'en aller pour deux mois dans ma propriété de Grouchevka (près de Khersov).

Au revoir et bonne chance.

Vive l'Angleterre et vive la Russie.

Cordialement à vous,

NICHOLAS M.

His brother, the Grand Duke Serge, whom I met at a dinner shortly afterwards, remarked that had I been a Russian subject I should have been sent to Siberia. Without being seriously preoccupied, I was nevertheless relieved to find, at the Russian New Year's reception a few days after my audience, the Emperor as friendly disposed as ever. In the short conversation which I had with him no reference was made by either of us to my recent audience. I said nothing more

about the internal situation; but having heard that His Majesty suspected a young Englishman, who had been a college friend of Prince Felix Yusupoff, of having been concerned in Rasputin's murder, I took the opportunity of assuring him that the suspicion was absolutely groundless. His Majesty thanked me and said that he was very glad to hear this.

About a week later a Russian friend of mine, who was afterwards a member of the Provisional Government, sent me a message through Colonel Thornhill, our assistant military attaché, to say that there would be a revolution before Easter, but that I need not be alarmed, as it would not last more than a fortnight. I have reason to believe that this message was founded on fact, and that a military *coup d'état* was then being prepared, not for the purpose of deposing the Emperor, but of forcing him to grant a Constitution. Its promoters were, unfortunately, forestalled by the popular rising which carried through the March revolution. I say "unfortunately," because it would have been better, both for Russia and the dynasty, had the long-expected revolution come from above instead of from below.

The publication on January 20 of an Imperial rescript, directing the President of the Council to devote special attention to the food and transport questions and to work in harmony with the Duma and the Zemstvos, aroused hopes that were not destined to materialize. Protopopoff, on whose shoulders Rasputin's mantle had fallen, was now more powerful than ever. Mentally deranged, he would, in his audiences with the Empress, repeat warnings and messages which he had received in his imaginary converse with Rasputin's spirit. He had completely won Her Majesty's

confidence, and having convinced her that, with the measures which he was taking to reorganize the police, he was equal to dealing with any situation that might arise, he was given a free hand to continue his insane policy.

On January 29 the Allied delegates arrived, and a preliminary meeting of the conference was held in the afternoon under the presidency of the Foreign Minister, Pokrowski. Great Britain was represented by Lord Milner, Lord Revelstoke, General Sir Henry Wilson and myself; France, by M. Doumergue, General Castelnau and Paléologue; and Italy, by Signor Scialoja, General Ruggieri and Carlotti, the Italian Ambassador. On the 31st the delegates were received by the Emperor, and on February 3 we were all invited to a gala dinner at the palace at Tsarskoe. As doyen of the diplomatic body, I had the honour of being placed on the Emperor's right, and His Majesty talked to me during the greater part of the dinner. The only questions, to which I called his attention, were the food crisis and Russia's man power. As regarded the first, I told him that, according to my reports, there was such a scarcity of foodstuffs in some provinces that the supplies were not expected to last more than a fortnight. This shortage seemed to be due to lack of co-ordination between the Ministries of Agriculture and Transport and to the absence of any organized system of distribution. The latter duty, I suggested, might with advantage be entrusted to the Zemstvos. The Emperor agreed that the Minister of Agriculture ought to avail himself of the services of the latter, adding that, if workmen ran short of food, strikes were certain to follow.

With regard to the second question, I observed that Russia was not making the most of her vast man power, and that, though she badly needed certain metals, her mineral wealth was not properly exploited. Had His Majesty, I asked, ever contemplated following Germany's example, and instituting some form of obligatory auxiliary service for all? The Emperor replied that he had already had this question under his consideration, and that he hoped that it might be possible to take some step in the direction which I had indicated. It was, he added, but right that in times of national crises everybody should serve the State to the best of his abilities. The rest of our conversation was of a non-political character. For myself, personally, a melancholy interest attaches to this dinner, for it was the last occasion on which I ever saw the Emperor. At the same time it is some satisfaction to me to remember his marked friendliness at what, unsuspected by either of us, was to be our last interview. It was as if His Majesty wished to show me that not only he did not resent my outspoken language at my recent audience, but that he appreciated the motives which prompted me to speak so frankly to him.

With a view to expediting matters, the conference had been split up into three commissions—political, military, and technical. It was the last named, dealing as it did with the all-important questions of transport and munitions, that accomplished the most useful work. In his speech at the opening of the conference, General Gourko stated that Russia had mobilized fourteen million men, had lost two millions in killed and wounded, as well as two million prisoners, and had at present seven and a half millions under arms and two

and a half millions in her reserve depots. He did not hold out any hope of her army being able to take an offensive on a large scale till the new divisions, about to be formed, had been finally constituted, trained and equipped with the necessary guns, rifles and munitions. All that it could do meanwhile was to hold the enemy by actions of secondary importance. The outcome of the conference was a series of recommendations with regard to the war material and credits which it was proposed that the Allied Governments should place at Russia's disposal.

The conference separated on February 21, 1917.

CHAPTER XXIII

1917

THE session of the conference had synchronized with a temporary improvement in the internal situation, and there had been but few outward or visible signs of political unrest. It is hardly, therefore, to be wondered at that the Allied delegates, on returning to their respective countries, should have expressed themselves somewhat too optimistically with regard to the Russian outlook. My own views had undergone but little change. I had been instructed to report, for the information of the Imperial conference that was about to meet in London, as to the prospects of Russia continuing in the war; and, after consultation with Lord Milner, with whom it had been my privilege to work during his stay in Petrograd, I telegraphed to the Foreign Office on February 18 as follows:

> Though attacks are occasionally made on us in the reactionary gutter Press, the anti-British campaign has died out and Anglo-Russian relations were never better than at present. The Emperor, most of his Ministers and the bulk of the nation are all firm supporters of the Anglo-Russian Alliance. It may, indeed, be safely said that the mass of the people fully appreciate the enormous services which Great Britain is rendering with her fleet, her armies and her purse, and that it is to her that they look for the realization of their hopes of final victory.

It is more difficult to speak with precision on the question of Russia continuing in the war. The majority of the nation, including the Government and the army, are at one in their determination to fight it out to a victorious finish; but there the national unity ends. The Emperor, the supreme factor, is deplorably weak; but the one point on which we can count on his remaining firm is the war, more especially as the Empress, who virtually governs Russia, is herself sound on this question. She is not, as is so often asserted, a German working in Germany's interests, but a reactionary, who wishes to hand down the autocracy intact to her son. It is for this reason that she prompts the Emperor to choose, as his Ministers, men on whom she can rely to carry out a firm policy quite regardless of their qualifications; but in so doing she is acting as the unconscious tool of others, who really are German agents. While the latter are doing all they can to press on the Emperor a policy of reaction and repression, they are at the same time preaching revolution to his subjects in the hope that Russia, rent by internal dissensions, will be forced to make peace. The Emperor, by allowing Protopopoff to take measures directly calculated to provoke disturbances, has played into their hands. Protopopoff, as Minister of the Interior, has appointed to posts in his own and other Government departments reactionaries who are as corrupt as they are incompetent; he has virtually vetoed all public meetings, notably those of the Union of Zemstvos, and has tried but failed to dissolve the latter altogether; he is working for the dissolution of the Duma, restricting the liberty of the Press and re-establishing the preliminary censorship. His latest move has been to arrest a dozen of the workmen's representatives in the industrial war committees. There would already have been an explosion were it not for the fact that the Duma is so conscious of the gravity of the situation that it will do nothing to compromise the success of the war. Though the workmen are greatly incensed at the arrest of their representatives, high wages, combined with patriotism, have so far averted strikes.

Should there be a shortage of food supplies, strikes will

inevitably follow; and it is the economic rather than the political situation that causes me anxiety. If only it was a question of the latter, the final settlement might be postponed till after the war; but the former is an ever-present danger. It may at any moment fan the smouldering political discontent into a flame, with results that will seriously prejudice the cause of the war. On the railways the reserve stock of fuel has fallen so low that on one line there is said to be only enough for a few days, and many people fear that, even if the reserve stocks are temporarily replenished, the shortage will again make itself felt when once the regular traffic, which is at present reduced to a minimum, is resumed. Many munition factories have already been temporarily closed owing to want of fuel and raw materials, and the danger of a shortage of supplies, both for the army and the towns, cannot be altogether excluded.

I would sum up the situation as follows: Although the Emperor and the majority of his subjects are bent on fighting out the war to a finish, Russia will not, in my opinion, be able to face a fourth winter campaign if the present situation is indefinitely prolonged. On the other hand, Russia is so rich in natural resources that there would be no cause for anxiety were the Emperor to entrust the conduct of the war to really capable Ministers. As it is, the future is a sealed book. The political or the economic situation may have some disagreeable surprise in store for us, while the financial situation may be compromised by repeated issues of paper money. Russia, however, is a country that has a happy knack of muddling through, and my only hope is that she will be able to hold out to the end if we continue to give her the necessary assistance.

On February 27 the Duma met, and the opening sitting, which I attended, passed off so quietly that I thought I could safely take a short holiday in Finland. During the ten days which I spent there no rumours reached me of the coming storm. It was only as my wife and I were returning on Sunday, March 11, by

the last train which got into Petrograd, that my servant brought us news, as we were nearing the capital, of a tramway and isvostchick (cab) strike. The part of the town through which we passed on our short drive to the Embassy was perfectly quiet, and, except for a few patrols of soldiers on the quays and the absence of trams and isvostchicks, there was nothing very unusual about its general aspect.

The situation, nevertheless, was already very serious. Owing to the coal shortage referred to in my telegram quoted above, some of the factories had to close down, and there were consequently several thousand workmen unemployed. This fact, taken by itself, would not have been very alarming, as they had been paid and were not out to make trouble. But they wanted bread, and many of them, after waiting for hours in the queues outside the bakers' shops, had been unable to get any. On Thursday, March 8, there had been a stormy sitting in the Duma, in which the Government had been violently attacked on account of its failure to revictual Petrograd; and it was the bread shortage that was at the root of the agitation which began on the same day to manifest itself among the workmen. In the evening several of the bread shops in the poorer quarters of the town were looted, and a patrol of Cossacks was for the first time seen galloping down the Nevski.

On the following day the agitation increased. The people wanted an assurance that something would be done to relieve the food crisis, but none was forthcoming. Groups of workmen and students paraded the streets, followed by a crowd of men, women and children who had come out of curiosity to see what

was going to happen. But for the most part it was a good-humoured crowd that made way for the Cossacks when the latter were ordered to clear some street, and even occasionally cheered them as they passed. The Cossacks, on their side, were careful not to hurt anybody and—what was of bad omen for the Government—laughed and talked with those near them. It was only towards the police, with whom they had several collisions in the course of the day, that the crowd adopted a hostile attitude. In some of the streets also tramcars were broken and overturned.

Meanwhile the Socialist leaders, who had for months past been carrying on an active propaganda in the factories and barracks, had not been idle, and on Saturday—the 10th—the town assumed a more serious aspect. There was what almost amounted to a general strike, and the crowd of workmen who surged up and down the Nevski presented a more organized appearance. Nobody quite knew what was going to happen, but there was a general feeling that the opportunity was too favourable to be allowed to pass without something being done. On the whole, however, the attitude of the people was still peaceful. In the evening there was a little shooting, for which the policemen, whom Protopopoff had had dressed up in soldiers' uniforms, were held responsible.

It was now that the Government determined to have recourse to stern repressive measures. On the Sunday morning (March 11) General Khabaloff, military governor, had had notices posted up all over the town warning the workmen that those who did not return to work on the following day would be sent to the front, and announcing that the police and military

had orders to disperse any crowd that collected in the streets with all the forces at their command. This warning was disregarded, the crowds were as great as ever, and, in the course of the day, some two hundred were killed by the fire of the troops. In the afternoon, however, a company of the Pavlovsk Regiment mutinied on receiving the order to fire, and had to be disarmed by the Preobrazhenski Regiment. By the evening all resistance had been overcome, the crowds had been dispersed and order temporarily restored. But the movement, whose original object had been to secure the immediate adoption of measures for remedying the shortage of provisions, now assumed a political character and aimed at the overthrow of a Government that was responsible for the shooting as well as for the food crisis.

With the fatality that dogged his footsteps the Emperor, who had spent the months of January and February at Tsarskoe, feeling that he could no longer absent himself from Headquarters, had returned to Mohileff—more than twenty hours distant by train—on Thursday, March 8. Had he remained at Tsarskoe a few days longer, within reach of those who could have kept him accurately informed of the development of events in the capital, he would have been better able to appreciate the extreme gravity of the situation. On the Saturday General Alexeieff had advised him to lose no time in making the necessary concessions, and on the Sunday Rodzianko had telegraphed to him, saying that anarchy prevailed in the capital and that it was absolutely necessary for him to entrust someone, who enjoyed the confidence of the nation, with power to form a new Government. "I pray God," Rodzianko

concluded, "that at this hour the responsibility may not fall on the wearer of the Crown." Rodzianko at the same time communicated this telegram to the generals in command of the various fronts with a request for their support, and soon afterwards received replies from General Ruszki and General Brussiloff, saying that they had carried out his wish. Whether Rodzianko's telegram ever reached the Emperor, or whether it was purposely kept back from him, General Voyeikoff, the prefect of the Imperial palaces, did, in his conversations with His Majesty, undoubtedly misrepresent the true state of affairs and scout the idea of a revolution. The Government, meanwhile, could think of nothing better to do than to prorogue the Duma.

During the night of Sunday there was violent agitation in the barracks, where the soldiers had met to consider what was to be their attitude on the following day. Were they to shoot down their own kith and kin if the order to fire was given? That was the question which they were asking one another. The answer to that question was given on Monday morning, when the soldiers of one of the Guard regiments—the Preobrazhenski—on being ordered to fire, turned and shot their officers. The Volynski Regiment, that was sent to coerce them, followed their example. Other regiments did the same, and by midday some 25,000 troops had made common cause with the people. In the course of the morning the arsenal was stormed and its store of rifles, guns and ammunition seized. Then followed in rapid succession the burning of the law courts, the raiding of the central office of the secret police and the destruction of all its compromising archives, the release of both the political and criminal

prisoners in the three principal prisons, and the surrender of the fortress of SS. Peter and Paul.

The Government, supine and incapable, had mismanaged matters from the first. A strong energetic Minister like Stolypin could, with tact and firmness, have kept the movement within bounds; but the Government failed altogether to reassure the people with regard to the food crisis, while they adopted ineffective measures to restore order that did but serve to exasperate the masses and to play into the hands of the real revolutionaries. Finally, by ordering the troops to fire on the people, they fanned the prevailing discontent into a blaze that spread with lightning speed over the whole town. But the initial mistake lay with the military authorities, who ought, had they not been altogether lacking in foresight, to have left a small body of well disciplined and reliable troops to maintain order in the capital. As it was, the garrison—some 150,000 in all—was composed solely of depot troops. They were all young soldiers, fresh from their villages, and undergoing training prior to being sent to fill up the gaps made in their regiments at the front. The corps of officers entrusted with their training was far too small to handle so large a body of men. It consisted of men who had been invalided home on account of their wounds, and of inexperienced boys from the military schools who were quite incapable of maintaining discipline when the crisis came.

The mistake thus committed was the more inexplicable as Petrograd, from the revolutionary point of view, had always been the danger spot. It was the centre of the Socialist propaganda that was making headway both in the barracks and the factories. It was full of German

agents, working for the overthrow of the Empire as the surest stepping stone to the eventual elimination of Russia from the war. Its atmosphere, moreover, was so charged with pessimism that the Emperor more than once told me how glad he was to shake off its depressing influence and to return to the more bracing air of the front.

I had, as already stated, only got back to Petrograd on the Sunday evening, and on Monday at noon I went, as usual, with my French colleague to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. While I was there General Knox telephoned to tell me that a large part of the garrison had mutinied and was in undisputed control of the Liteini Prospekt. I repeated this message to Pokrowski, saying that Protopopoff might congratulate himself on having brought Russia face to face with revolution by his provocative policy. Pokrowski agreed, but contended that order and discipline must be restored. A military dictator, he said, would be appointed, troops would be sent from the front to quell the mutiny, and the Duma would be prorogued till April 25. I replied that it was madness to prorogue the Duma, and that the only result would be that the insurrectionary movement, which was at present confined to Petrograd, would spread to Moscow and other towns. It was too late now to repress the movement by force, and the only remedy lay in a policy of concession and conciliations. Pokrowski dissented, saying that had it been merely a rising of the civil population the Government might have tried to come to terms with them; but in the case of soldiers who had broken their military oath to the Emperor, military discipline must first of all be re-established.

In spite of the order for the prorogation of the Duma, the committee of that chamber remained in session; while Rodzianko had despatched a second telegram to the Emperor, telling him that the last hour had come in which to decide the fate of the country and dynasty, and that His Majesty must take immediate steps or to-morrow would be too late. Shortly afterwards the Duma learnt that the Minister of War, General Belaieff, had received a telegram from the Emperor, stating that he was returning to Petrograd, and that General Ivanoff—whom he had appointed dictator—would shortly arrive with a large body of troops. This telegram repeated the views, expressed to me by Pokrowski, with regard to the action to be taken against soldiers who had broken their military oath.

At half-past one, delegates from the troops on the north side of the river came to inquire what directions the Duma had to give them. Rodzianko, who received them, said that the watchword of the Duma was the abolition of the present Government. He said nothing about the Emperor, for the Duma, like most people, had been so taken by surprise by the rapid march of events that it was at a loss what to do. A little later a detachment of insurgent troops arrived, and were harangued by Kerensky and Cheidze, who told them that they must maintain order, prevent excesses, and stand firm for the cause of freedom. They were asked by Kerensky to furnish a guard for the Duma, and, in order to avoid trouble, Rodzianko consented to the removal of the old guard. Kerensky, a young lawyer —the son of a former director of the Tashkent High School and of a Jewish mother—had already made his mark by the fiery speeches, which he had delivered in

the Duma as leader of the Social Revolutionary Party. I shall have much to say about him later on, but for the moment it is sufficient to record the fact that during these critical days he acted, when due allowance is made for his Socialist convictions, loyally with the Duma committee. Cheidze, on the contrary, who represented the Social Democrats, worked solely in the interest of his party. About three o'clock, after a sitting held with closed doors, the Duma appointed an executive committee for the preservation of order, representative of all parties except the extreme right. It was to be presided over by Rodzianko, and included two Conservatives, three Moderates, five Cadets and Progressists, and two Socialists—Kerensky and Cheidze.

The executive committee of the council of workmen's delegates at the same time summoned a meeting of their representatives in the palace of the Duma for the same evening. The soldiers, who had passed over to the people, were invited to send one delegate for each company and the factories one for each thousand workmen.

All through the afternoon troops kept arriving at the Duma, which gradually became crowded with a mob of soldiers, workmen and students. In the evening Schteglovitoff, the president of the Council of Empire, formerly Minister of Justice, and an ultra-reactionary, was brought in under arrest, while towards midnight a shabby-looking man, in a soiled fur coat, appeared, saying: "I am the late Minister of the Interior, Protopopoff. I desire the welfare of our country, and so I surrender myself voluntarily."

Thanks to the efforts of the executive committee, the situation in the town showed signs of improvement

on Tuesday (March 13). The two principal events were the surrender of the Admiralty, after a threat that otherwise it would be destroyed by artillery fire from the fortress, and the attack on the Hotel Astoria in consequence of shots having been fired from it at a company of soldiers that was marching past with the Red Flag at its head. Though shooting continued the whole day, it was for the most part confined to the firing by the police of the machine guns, which Protopopoff had had placed on the roofs of the houses, and to the attempts made by the soldiers to dislodge the police by rifle fire. I was able to walk to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the morning to pay my farewell visit to Pokrowski, and on my way home with my French colleague we were, on being recognized, cheered by the crowds gathered on the quay. In the afternoon I again went out with Bruce to call on Sazonoff, who was staying in an hotel on the Nevski; and, though the rattle of the machine guns overhead was not a pleasant accompaniment, we got there and returned without any incident.

The old Government had by this time ceased to exist, and all its members, with the exception of Pokrowski and of the Minister of Marine, Admiral Grigorowich, had been arrested, together with Stürmer, the Metropolitan Pitirim, and a few other reactionaries. By the evening the whole garrison, as well as all the troops which had arrived from Tsarskoe and the neighbouring districts, had gone over to the Duma, while many officers had also offered their services. So far as Petrograd was concerned, the revolution was already an accomplished fact; but the situation was beset with colossal difficulties. The work-

men were armed, numbers of released criminals were at large, in many regiments the soldiers were without officers, while in the Duma a sharp struggle was proceeding between the executive committee and the newly formed Soviet.

The Duma had been the rallying point of the troops who had achieved the revolution. Its leaders were for the most part Monarchists and advocates of a war to a victorious finish. But at the critical moment they failed to assert themselves, and allowed the Democrats, who were pronounced Republicans, with a large percentage of pacifists, to forestall them and to assume control over the troops. They had further tolerated the session in one of their own assembly rooms of a rival body, the Soviet, that, without any legal status, had constituted itself the representative council of the workmen and soldiers. If only there had been among its members a real leader of men, capable of profiting by the first natural move of the insurgent troops towards the Duma, to rally them round that assembly as the only legally constituted organ in the country, the Russian revolution might have had a happier sequel. But no such leader arose, and, while the Duma was still deliberating and seeking for a policy, the Democrats, who knew their own minds, acted. Once assured of the support of the troops, Cheidze, their leader, was, as he told a British officer, master of the situation.

Meanwhile the Emperor had left the Stavka for Tsarskoe on the night of the 12/13th; but finding on arriving at Bologoi that the rails in front of the train had been pulled up by workmen, His Majesty had proceeded to Pskoff, the headquarters of General

Ruszki, the commander-in-chief of the northern front. On Wednesday, the 14th, the Grand Duke Michael, who was stopping in a private house near the Embassy, asked me to come and see him. He told me that, in spite of what had happened at Bologoi, he still expected the Emperor to arrive at Tsarskoe about six that evening; that Rodzianko was to submit for His Majesty's signature a manifesto granting a constitution and empowering Rodzianko to select the members of the new Government; and that he himself, as well as the Grand Duke Cyril, had appended their signatures to the draft of this manifesto in order to strengthen Rodzianko's hands.

His Imperial Highness added that he hoped to see the Emperor in the evening, and inquired whether there was anything special that I would like him to say. I replied that I would only ask him to beseech the Emperor, in the name of King George, who had such a warm affection for His Majesty, to sign the manifesto, to show himself to his people, and to effect a complete reconciliation with them. But while I was talking with the Grand Duke the proposed manifesto was vetoed by the Soviet, and the abdication of the Emperor decided. Almost at the same time the Emperor, on being informed by General Ruszki of the state of affairs at Petrograd, had telegraphed saying that he was ready to make all the concessions desired by the Duma if the latter thought that they would restore order in the country; but, as Rodzianko telegraphed back, it was "Too late." As the only other alternative was civil war, the Emperor on the following morning (the 15th) handed General Ruszki a telegram for despatch to Petrograd announc-

ing his abdication in favour of his son. A few hours later—as M. Gilliard tells us in his sad but very interesting story of the Emperor Nicholas's tragic destiny—His Majesty sent for the Court physician, Professor Féodoroff, and asked him to tell him the truth about the Tsarevitch's health. On being told that, as the illness was an incurable one, his son's life might be cut short at any moment, the Emperor said, "Since Alexis cannot serve his country as I would have wished him to, we have the right to keep him." When, therefore, in the evening, the two Duma delegates, Guchkoff and Schulgin, arrived, charged with the mission of demanding the abdication of the Emperor in favour of his son, under the regency of the Grand Duke Michael, the Emperor handed them the following ukase, in which he renounced the throne in favour of his brother:

The destiny of Russia, the honour of our heroic army, the good of the people, the future of our beloved Motherland, demand the prosecution of the war at all costs until a victorious end. . . . In these days, that are supremely decisive for Russia, we have considered it as a duty, laid on our conscience, to facilitate for our people the close union and rallying of all popular forces for the purpose of a speedy achievement of victory, and, in concert with the Duma, we have deemed it good to abdicate from the throne of the Russian Empire and to divest ourselves of the supreme power. Not wishing to part with our beloved son, we transmit our inheritance to our brother, the Grand Duke Michael Alexandrovich, and give him our blessing on his ascending the Throne of the Russian Empire.

The Emperor's last official act was to appoint the Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholaievich commander-in-chief

and Prince Lvoff (the popular leader of the Zemstvos) as the new President of the Council. For, as the result of a compromise between the Duma committee and the Soviet, a Provisional Government had been formed to carry on the administration of the country till a constituent assembly had decided whether Russia was to be a Republic or a Monarchy. The principal members of this Government belonged to the Cadet and Octobrist parties. Miliukoff, the leader of the former, was appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Guchkoff, the leader of the latter, Minister of War. Kerensky, who was made Minister of Justice, served as a link between the Soviet and the Government, and it had been mainly thanks to him that the opposition of the former had been overcome. During the heated discussion that had taken place on the question of the regency he had, in announcing his appointment as Minister of Justice, said in the Soviet: "No one is a more ardent Republican than I; but we must bide our time. Nothing can come to its full height at once. We shall have our Republic, but we must win the war; then we can do what we will." With the constitution of the Provisional Government Rodzianko, who had played such a prominent part during the early days of the revolution, retired into the background; and the Duma, which had fought so hard and so long to secure the appointment of a Ministry responsible to itself, now gradually came to be regarded as an archaic institution, till it finally disappeared from the scene.

The question of the Grand Duke Michael's claim to the throne had still to be decided, and during the whole of Thursday (the 16th) the members of the Provisional Government were in consultation with him on the

subject. Miliukoff and Guchkoff alone supported his claim, contending that it was necessary that someone should be appointed head of the State. The others held that the fact that the Emperor had confirmed Prince Lvoff's appointment as head of the Provisional Government sufficed. Finally, the Grand Duke, who personally had no ambition to assume the burden of Empire, yielded to Kerensky's passionate appeal and signed a manifesto, declaring that he could only accept the supreme power should such be the desire of the nation, clearly expressed in a constituent assembly elected for the purpose of definitely deciding the form of government to be adopted. He further called on all citizens to obey the Provisional Government. The new Government of Russia was thus not, strictly speaking, a Republican Government; and, on my once referring to it as such, Miliukoff caught me up, saying that it was only a Provisional Government pending the decision of the future constituent assembly.

As regarded the conduct of the war, its task had been rendered extremely difficult, if not impossible, by the publication by the Soviet, on March 14, of the famous Prikas No. 1. By forbidding soldiers to salute their officers, by transferring the disciplinary powers of the latter to committees of soldiers, and by decreeing that in all their political actions the troops were to obey the orders of the Soviet, it directly undermined the discipline of the army. Nor did the announcement, contained in the Government's first published declaration, that the military units which had taken part in the revolutionary movement were neither to be disarmed nor transferred from Petrograd, help to improve matters.

CHAPTER XXIV

1917

THE Emperor—who after his abdication had returned to his former headquarters at Mohileff —was now styled "Colonel" Romanoff, according to his official rank in the army. On March 22 he was brought to Tsarskoe, where he and the Empress were placed under arrest. When the news of his abdication had first reached the palace the Empress had refused to credit it, and she was almost stunned on being told by the Grand Duke Paul that it was an accomplished fact. But, when the first shock was over, she behaved with wonderful dignity and courage. "I am now only a nursing sister," she said; and on one occasion, when a conflict seemed imminent between the insurgent troops and the palace guard, she went out with one of her daughters and implored the officers to arrange terms with the latter so that no blood should be shed. Her children had all fallen ill with the measles, which, in the case of the Tsarevitch and the Grand Duchess Marie, had taken a somewhat serious turn, so that all her time was spent in going from one sick-room to the other.

Though, during their stay at Tsarskoe, Their Majesties were under constant guard, and could not even walk in their private garden without being stared

at by a little crowd of curious spectators who watched them through the park railings, they were spared any ill-treatment. Special measures for their protection were taken by Kerensky, as at one moment the extremists, who clamoured for their punishment, had threatened to seize them and to imprison them in the fortress. In the first speech which he delivered at Moscow, Kerensky had declared that he would not allow more blood to be shed, and that he was not going to be the Marat of the Russian revolution. One of his reasons for abolishing the death penalty was to forestall a possible demand for the Emperor's execution. His Majesty, on being informed of this, exclaimed, "It is a mistake. The abolition of the death penalty will ruin the discipline of the army. If he is abolishing it to save me from danger, tell him that I am ready to give my life for the good of my country." The removal of Their Majesties to Tobolsk in August was also mainly prompted by the desire to guard them against the dangers to which they would have been exposed in the event of a successful Bolshevik rising; and there can be but little doubt that, had they remained at Tsarskoe, they would not long have outlived the November revolution. Their children, who were offered the choice of residing with the Empress Marie in the Crimea or accompanying their parents to Tobolsk, chose the latter course, though warned that they would have to submit to the same regulations as the Emperor and Empress.

At the end of September I had a conversation with the Government commissary, who accompanied the Imperial family to Tobolsk, which I recorded in the following letter to Lord Stamfordham:

Makharoff, who is a moderate Socialist, spoke very nicely of the Emperor, and seems to have done all he could to meet His Majesty's wishes. He said that the departure from Tsarskoe was very painful to witness, as nearly all members of the Imperial family were in tears, but that, with the exception of the Empress, they very soon recovered their spirits, and were laughing and talking an hour later. The railway journey lasted three or four days, and the train stopped for an hour every day, in order to let the Emperor and his children take a walk. The journey on the steamer took another four days; but, as certain alterations had to be made in the house at Tobolsk, the Emperor and his family remained a few days longer on board the steamer. Makharoff admitted that the house was not a large one, especially in the eyes of those accustomed to live in palaces, and that it was not luxuriously furnished. He had since endeavoured to remedy this latter defect by forwarding carpets, family pictures, wine, etc., from the Palace at Tsarskoe. The worst feature of the house was that it was situated in the lower part of the town, and consequently rather damp, and that it had but a small garden. It had, however, a largish park just opposite it, where the members of the Imperial family had now permission to walk. They were also allowed to attend divine service in the church, instead of in the house as had been arranged at first. The Emperor had also permission to go shooting if he wished.

Tobolsk, he said, was a small town of some 27,000 inhabitants, and was at such a distance from any railway station that the Emperor was in perfect safety there. The land all round it was owned by large Tartar peasant proprietors, who cordially disliked the revolution, as they were afraid of being expropriated, should there be a redistribution of land among the peasants. Many peasants, he added, came on pilgrimage to Tobolsk to see the house where the Emperor lived.

As regarded the climate, he said that, though damp at certain seasons, it was healthy, and that the winter was really more tolerable than at Petrograd, as it was not accompanied by the same biting winds to which we are subjected here.

He had begged the Emperor, when he took leave of His Majesty, not to hesitate to tell him if he had any complaints to make; but the Emperor had assured him that he was quite satisfied. Both the Emperor and the Empress had bid him good-bye in a friendly way. The Emperor had spoken to him more than once of the political situation, and had said that he was quite ready to die for Russia. Makharoff added that he was sure that His Majesty was quite sincere in saying this.

For the story of all that they suffered during the latter part of their stay at Tobolsk, I must refer my readers to the graphic pages of M. Gilliard's "Le Tragique Destin de Nicholas II," while I devote the rest of this chapter to a short review of the Emperor's reign.

The Emperor Nicholas II is one of the most pathetic figures in history. He loved his country. He had its welfare and greatness at heart. Yet it was he who was to precipitate the catastrophe, which has brought it to utter ruin and misery. Had he lived in classic times, the story of his life and death would have been made the subject of some great tragedy by the poets of ancient Greece. They would have represented him as a predestined victim pursued, in each successive act, by some relentless fate, till the curtain fell on that heart-rending scene in the basement of the house at Ekaterinburg, where, with his only son by his side, with his wife and daughters looking on, awaiting the same doom, he was brutally murdered by the Bolsheviks. The only ray of light in the dark picture is the fact that, united as they had been in their lives, they remained so till the end, and that in death they were not divided.

The Emperor's marriage with Princess Alix of

Hesse had not been prompted by reasons of State. They had from the first been drawn together by feelings of mutual affection, and their love for each other had grown stronger with every passing year. Ideally happy though they were in their married life, the Emperor's choice was nevertheless an unfortunate one. Despite her many good qualities—her warm heart, her devotion to husband and children, her well-meant but ill-advised endeavours to inspire him with the firmness and decision which his character lacked—the Empress Alexandra was not a fitting helpmate for a Sovereign in his difficult position. Of a shy and retiring disposition, though a born autocrat, she failed to win the affection of her subjects. She misjudged the situation from the first, encouraging him, when the political waters were already running dangerously high, to steer a course fraught with danger to the ship of State. The tragic element is already discernible in the first act of the drama. A good woman, bent on serving her husband's interests, she is to prove the chosen instrument of his ruin. Diffident and irresolute, the Emperor was bound to fall under the influence of a will stronger than his. It was her blind faith in an unbridled autocracy that was to be his undoing. Had he had as his consort a woman with broader views and better insight, who would have grasped the fact that such a régime was an anachronism in the twentieth century, the history of his reign would have been different and he might still be Emperor of Russia.

But, baneful as was her influence over her husband in matters of internal policy, the Empress must be acquitted of the charge, so often brought against her, of having worked in Germany's interest. Kerensky

himself once told me that not a single compromising document had been found to show that either she or the Emperor had ever contemplated making a separate peace with Germany. He had, he said, had a long private conversation with the Empress after the revolution, in which Her Majesty had indignantly protested against the idea that she was pro-German. "I am English," she had declared, "and not German, and I have always been true to Russia." She was, he was convinced, speaking the truth, and though she unconsciously played the German game by inducing the Emperor to pursue a reactionary policy, she aimed solely at maintaining the autocracy intact, and not at bringing about a closer understanding with Germany. There were, however, he added, German agents in Rasputin's entourage.

Possessed of many gifts that would have fitted him to play the part of a constitutional Sovereign—a quick intelligence, a cultivated mind, method and industry in his work, and an extraordinary natural charm that attracted all who came near him—the Emperor Nicholas had not inherited his father's commanding personality nor the strong character and prompt decision which are so essential to an autocratic ruler. Alexander III had, on the advice of Pobiedonostseff, the Procurator of the Holy Synod, dropped the scheme of reforms which Alexander II was on the point of signing when his life was cut short by a Nihilist bomb. He had throughout his reign pursued a reactionary policy based on bureaucratic centralization. On his death the hopes of the nation were centred on his son. These hopes were reflected in many of the loyal addresses presented by the Zemstvos on his accession to the throne. In one

of them—that of Tver—the desire for some form of constitutional government was definitely formulated.

The occasion was, indeed, one that afforded a young Sovereign a golden opportunity of winning over his people by some timely concession; but the Emperor Nicholas let it slip, as he was to let other similar occasions slip during the course of his reign. A devoted and admiring son, and a pupil of that arch reactionary, Pobiedonostseff, he had been brought up in the strictest school of orthodox autocracy without ever acquiring the habit of himself taking the initiative. He had assimilated his tutor's doctrines, and he regarded the autocracy as a sort of sacred heritage which he was bound to preserve intact in the form in which it had been bequeathed to him. His one idea on succeeding to the throne was to follow in his father's footsteps and to leave things as his father had left them. Such reverence had he for his father's memory that he even refused to assume a higher rank in the army, of which he was commander-in-chief, than that of colonel, which his father had conferred on him. The representatives of the Zemstvos were therefore dismissed with the chilling response that they must abandon all such "insensate dreams," as it was his firm intention to continue his father's policy. It seems, however, from what M. Isvolsky tells us in his "Souvenirs de mon Ministère," that the Emperor's original intention had been to hold less uncompromising language, but that he had been persuaded that it was his duty to uphold the traditions of his father's reign. It was only at the last moment that Pobiedonostseff handed him the reply, drafted by himself, which the Emperor read to the representatives of the Zemstvos without having fully grasped its purport. He was so

wanting in self-reliance that he allowed himself in this, as well as on many subsequent occasions, to be influenced against his better judgment by persons possessed of stronger wills than his own.

Such an inauspicious opening of the new reign created a feeling of despondency in the minds of all thinking Russians, while the terrible disaster that marred the Coronation festivities in May, 1896, was interpreted by a superstitious people as of evil augury for the future. Owing to faulty arrangements on the part of the responsible authorities, the huge crowd which had forgathered in the enclosure set apart for the distribution of the customary gifts was seized with panic, and in the crush which ensued some three or four thousand were trampled to death. A further incident, trivial in itself, produced, according to M. Isvolsky, a profound impression on His Majesty. As the Emperor, wearing the Imperial crown and mantle, was approaching the altar to receive the consecrating unction, the collar of the Order of St. André became detached and fell at his feet. Naturally prone to fatalism and superstition, His Majesty regarded this as a Divine warning of misfortune to come.

His initial and fundamental mistake was in failing to comprehend that the Russia of his day could not be governed on the same lines as the Russia which Peter the Great had known. The Empire had in the interim undergone a vast territorial expansion. Its population had risen to over 160 millions; it had witnessed the liberation of the serfs, the birth of industries in the great towns, the consequent increase in the numbers of the proletariat, and the growing influence of the *intelligentsia*. There were new forces at work, and the

nation's aspirations had grown with its growth. The old policy of centralization was no longer workable, and devolution was the only effective remedy. But to entrust the Zemstvos with a direct share in the administration of their respective provinces would have been resisted by the bureaucracy, which had succeeded in monopolizing all the functions of the administration. It was not, moreover, in the Emperor's character to initiate such a policy nor to face the opposition of those who would regard it as an encroachment on their prerogatives. Impossible as it was for him personally to control the administrative machinery of his vast Empire, he had to bear the responsibility for the sins of omission and commission of the bureaucracy that governed Russia in his name. Even when, after the revolutionary movement that followed the disastrous war with Japan the principle of national representation was conceded, the administration of the country remained as centralized as before.

Nor did the reformed Ministry that was constituted at the same time greatly advance matters. It was not a Cabinet in the ordinary sense. It had no collective responsibility and it worked in water-tight compartments. Each of its members was directly responsible to the Emperor for the conduct of the affairs of his own department without being under any obligation to consult the President of the Council with regard to them. It was, moreover, like all its successors, composed of heterogeneous elements. Witte, the first President, was a progressist, while the Minister of the Interior (Durnovo) was an extreme reactionary. The natural consequence was that owing to divided counsels it could never take any concerted action. Though I,

personally, mistrusted Count Witte on account of his pronounced pro-German views, I fully recognize his merits as an able and far-seeing statesman who rendered his country invaluable services. He introduced the gold currency, he negotiated the Treaty of Portsmouth that re-established peace with Japan, and he induced the Emperor to publish the October manifesto of 1905 that called the Duma into existence. In his most interesting and instructive book, "The Eclipse of Russia," Dr. Dillon has ably played the part of an admiring Boswell and done full justice to his memory; but, in his devotion to his idol, Dr. Dillon is inclined to see things too much through Witte's spectacles. Now, the Emperor and Witte were mutually antipathetic, and the latter's dislike of his Sovereign so biased his judgment that, in his eyes, His Majesty could do nothing right. Dr. Dillon, taking his cue from Witte, has not a good word to say for the Emperor—he applies to him every sort of injurious epithet, attributes to him unworthy motives, and accuses him of falseness. His initiative in convoking the Hague Peace Conference in 1898 is represented as having been prompted by the desire to hoodwink the Austrian Government and to enable the Russian Minister of War to steal a march on his colleague in the Austrian capital. Again, while admitting that the Emperor did not wittingly lead Russia into the disastrous war with Japan, Dr. Dillon hints that he was financially interested in Bezobrazoff's schemes for Russia's political and economic expansion in the Far East. Inexplicable as it is that the Emperor should have allowed himself to be guided by the advice of such men as Bezobrazoff and Abaza, and should even have

permitted them to direct the course of the negotiations with regard to the question of the forest concessions on the Yalu that was the immediate cause of the final rupture, his tastes were so simple that he would never have been tempted to supplement his enormous revenues by speculating in such an enterprise. What it is difficult to explain is his misplaced confidence in unscrupulous adventurers who persuaded him that a firm, uncompromising attitude was necessary if he wished to avert war.

In order to show how false the Emperor was, both Count Witte and Dr. Dillon have cited the secret treaty signed by him and the Emperor William at Bjorkoe in July, 1905, as an act of treason directed against France. Under the terms of that treaty the two Emperors were to come to each other's assistance with all their land and sea forces in the event of either of them being attacked by another European Power. It was to come into force on the conclusion of peace between Russia and Japan, and the Emperor Nicholas was then to invite France to associate herself in its provisions by becoming a signatory. This last clause is sufficient in itself to show that the treaty was not directed against France. It was, as M. Isvolsky has conclusively proved in his memoirs, directed against Great Britain. The Emperor William had for months past been trying to persuade the Tsar to join a Continental league against us, but the latter had already (in November, 1904) objected that any treaty of this kind must be submitted to France before he could sign it. The Emperor William had thereupon contended that France would do nothing to constrain Great Britain to maintain peace unless she was con-

fronted with the *fait accompli* of a signed treaty. As these arguments failed to overcome the Emperor Nicholas's objections, the question was for a time left in abeyance. In the following summer, however, the Kaiser determined to see what a little personal persuasion would accomplish.

As the Emperor Nicholas was cruising with his family on the *Polar Star* in Finnish waters, the Emperor William suggested joining him on his own yacht and paying him what was to be treated as a surprise visit. He insisted on nobody being told about his intended visit, as he was most anxious that Count Lamsdorf, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, should not be summoned from St. Petersburg to assist at the meeting. The Emperor William arrived at Bjorkoe on July 23 with the text of the treaty in his pocket, to which he succeeded in getting the Emperor Nicholas to attach his signature, after a luncheon on board the *Hohenzollern*, only a few minutes before his departure at the end of his three days' stay. He further insisted on the treaty being countersigned by Herr von Tchirsky, a high official in the German Foreign Office, who was German Ambassador at Vienna at the outbreak of war, and by Admiral Birileff, the Russian Minister of Marine, who happened to be on board the *Polar Star*, but who was kept in ignorance of the nature of the document which he was to countersign. As M. Isvolsky points out, at the time the treaty was signed Great Britain and Russia were almost open enemies, and it was a perfectly legitimate act on the part of the Emperor to conclude an alliance directed against Japan's ally. On the other hand, he never contemplated being false to France. He had from the

first desired to consult her before definitely committing himself, but the dominating personality of the Kaiser overcame his resistance and made him, against his own better judgment, sign the treaty without having first secured her adhesion. He had fallen into the trap laid for him by the Emperor William. The latter, while professing to be our friend, was, with his usual falseness, endeavouring to form a coalition against us—a coalition into which he hoped to force France by confronting her with the spectre of a Russo-German alliance.

Already realizing the mistake which he had committed, the Emperor Nicholas on his return to St. Petersburg consulted Count Lamsdorf. The latter had no difficulty in convincing him of the necessity of taking immediate steps for the annulment of the treaty, and representations were accordingly made in Berlin to the effect that the treaty, not having been countersigned by the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, must be considered invalid. As these representations were unsuccessful, the Emperor Nicholas subsequently addressed a letter to the Emperor William, explaining that it was impossible to carry out its provisions owing to the adhesion of France being unobtainable. Though the Kaiser seems never to have admitted the invalidity of the treaty, the incident was finally closed in 1907, when Isvolsky, on the eve of the meeting of the two Emperors at Swinemünde, informed the German Chancellor that the Emperor Nicholas considered the Bjorkoe Treaty definitely abrogated and could not listen to any further arguments in favour of its revival.

The fact that the Emperor Nicholas sometimes

allowed Ministers, whom he was about to dismiss, to believe up to the very last that they still enjoyed his confidence, is also cited by His Majesty's critics as a proof of his falseness. He would, when receiving them in what, unknown to them, was to be their final audience, give them no hint that he was about to part with them. They would leave his presence and return to their Ministries without the least suspicion that they would, in the course of the next twenty-four hours, receive a letter from His Majesty dispensing with their services. Most of us dislike giving our servants notice, and so did the Emperor. He was not wittingly false, but he preferred to convey to them in a letter what he had not the moral courage to tell them to their faces, more especially when, in cases like that of Sazonoff, he was but acting under pressure from the Empress.

It was this besetting sin of weakness, combined with a lack of confidence in his own judgment, that made him the easy prey of those evil counsellors whom the Empress chose for the carrying out of her policy. He had many faults, but the charge of falsehood is non-proven. When I returned from Russia at the beginning of 1918 he was accused of having been on the point of betraying the Allies by making a separate peace with Germany. I refuted that infamous charge at the time, and I have, I trust, in the present work established the fact that we never had a more loyal friend and ally than the Emperor Nicholas. He was true to us till the very last, for there is reason to believe that, had he been prepared to purchase his life and liberty by recognizing and confirming the Treaty of Brest Litovsk, the Germans would have saved him.

It was his misfortune to have been born an autocrat, when he was by nature so unfitted for the rôle. He never really governed Russia, and by allowing the ruling bureaucracy to disregard his promises of freedom of speech, meeting, etc., made in the October manifesto of 1905, he forfeited to a great extent the confidence of his people. The burden of his inheritance grew heavier as his reign progressed. A vast Empire, in which some seventy-five per cent. of the population were illiterate, in which the revolutionary spirit of 1905 had never been laid, in which the Church, that had since the abolition of the Patriarchate by Peter the Great become a department of State, was rapidly losing its hold on the people owing to the scandalous appointments made through Rasputin's influence, in which justice was ill-administered, and in which nearly every branch of the administration was as incompetent as it was corrupt; and then, on the top of all this, a world war! The whole system was out of joint, and he, poor Emperor, was certainly not born to set it right.

It was no wonder that the fall of the old régime was welcomed with a sigh of relief, that the revolution spread from Petrograd to Moscow, from Moscow to Kieff, and thence all over the Empire. But it was not so much the Emperor as the régime of which the nation as a whole was weary. As a soldier remarked during the first days of the revolution: "Oh, yes, we must have a Republic, but we must have a good Tsar at the head." The Emperor and the Orthodox Church, of which he was the head, still represented the two great symbols of the political and spiritual creed of the mass of the Russian peasants. It was the Little Father

who personated Russia in their eyes and who formed the only link between the peasants of Siberia and the Ukraine and of the Caucasus and the northern provinces. It was an evil day for Russia when that link was broken, for it left a void that has never been filled. Could it have been averted? I believe that it could, had the Emperor been at Tsarskoe when the revolution broke out, or had he at once returned there. Even on the Monday (March 12) he might have saved the situation by going to the Duma and proclaiming a constitution. Mistrust of the Empress would have been the chief obstacle in the way of a settlement, and the Duma might have insisted on a separation—a condition to which the Emperor would never have consented. As it was, he only left the Stavka on the Monday night. When, on the Wednesday, he telegraphed from Pskoff offering a constitution, the Duma had lost control of the situation and it was too late. After that, he had only two courses open to him—either to abdicate or to go to the front and, after granting a constitution, to make a personal appeal to his troops. Those at the front were not nearly so disaffected as those in the rear, and the Emperor's prestige still counted for much. But such an appeal, if successful, would have meant civil war in the face of the enemy, and the Emperor therefore preferred to abdicate—a decision which, M. Gilliard tells us, he regretted when he heard at Tobolsk of the state of demoralization to which the army had been brought by Bolshevik propaganda.

In the farewell Order of the Day which he addressed to the army before finally leaving the Stavka —the publication of which was vetoed by the Provisional Government—the Emperor is seen at his best.

All personal considerations are cast aside, and all his thoughts are centred on his country, his allies, and on fighting out the war to a victorious finish.

These are his words:

This is the last time that I shall address you, my well-loved troops. Since I renounced the throne for myself and my son, the supreme power has, on the initiative of the Duma, passed into the hands of the Provisional Government. May God aid it to lead Russia along the path of glory and prosperity! May God also aid you, my valiant troops, to defend our country against its stubborn enemy.

For two years and a half you have fought incessantly; you have endured hardships; you have shed your blood; you have made great efforts; and now the hour approaches when Russia, united to her valiant Allies by the common desire for victory, will triumph over the resistance of the enemy. This war, unparalleled in history, must be fought out to a final and complete victory. Whoever thinks of peace at a moment like the present, whoever desires peace is a traitor to his country. I know that every true soldier thinks as I do.

Do your duty then—defend your country valorously—obey the Provisional Government—obey your officers—remember that any slackening of discipline is to render a service to the enemy. I firmly believe that unbounded love for your great Fatherland still lives in your hearts.

May God bless you and may the Great Martyr, St. George, lead you to victory.

Can anyone after reading the above appeal, written as it was at a moment when, having fallen from his high estate, he was being placed under arrest, believe, as his detractors would have us believe, that the Emperor was false?

Whether or not he had, as some pretend, a premonition of coming troubles, he bore his misfortunes

and sufferings with wonderful resignation and courage. A firm believer and a fatalist, he was always ready to accept anything that God might send him. As illustrating his general frame of mind, I may quote a story which Isvolsky tells in his "Souvenirs de mon Ministère." It was during the summer of 1906, and Isvolsky, who was then Minister for Foreign Affairs, had gone to Peterhof, where the Court was in residence, to make his usual weekly report to the Emperor. A serious mutiny had just broken out at Cronstadt, as a protest against the recent dissolution of the Duma, and the fortress was being bombarded by the fleet. Though the cannonade continued during the whole of the audience, the Emperor followed his report with the greatest attention, as if nothing unusual was happening, discussing all the more important points with him. When, at its close, the Emperor got up and looked out of the window towards Cronstadt, some ten miles distant on the other side of the gulf, Isvolsky could not resist asking him how he could remain so calm at a moment when the fate of his dynasty hung in the balance. The Emperor, turning to him, said—I give His Majesty's reply in Isvolsky's own words, and it forms a fitting ending to this review of his reign :

Si vous me voyez si peu troublé, c'est que j'ai la ferme, l'absolue croyance, que le sort de la Russie—que mon propre sort et celui de ma famille—est entre les mains de Dieu, qui m'a placé là où je suis. Quoi qu'il arrive, je m'inclinerai devant sa volonté, avec la conscience de n'avoir jamais eu d'autre pensée que celle de servir le pays qu'il m'a confié.

CHAPTER XXV

1917

WHILE there was still a chance of the Grand Duke Michael being accepted either as Regent or Emperor, I had asked for and received permission to recognize any Government that might be established *de facto*, in order that it might be the better able to assert its authority. I had also, in my conversations with Miliukoff—who had assumed charge of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs—strongly advocated the retention of the services of the Grand Duke Nicholas as the commander-in-chief best qualified to keep the army in hand. After the Grand Duke Michael's renunciation of the crown our only possible policy was to strengthen the hands of the Provisional Government in their struggle with the Soviet. The latter was ruining the army with its Socialist propaganda, and though the majority of its members professed themselves in favour of continuing the war, those on the extreme left advocated peace at any price. The speedy recognition of the Provisional Government was therefore, in my opinion, necessary; but when, on March 18, Miliukoff broached the subject to me, I told him that before acting on the authorization already given me I must have an assurance that the new Government was prepared to fight the war out to a finish and to restore discipline in the army. Miliukoff gave me this assur-

ance, but said that they were obliged to proceed cautiously on account of the extremists, and that his own position was a very difficult one. He was regarded with suspicion for having supported the Grand Duke Michael's claim to the throne, and he must either make some concessions or resign. Which course, he asked, would I prefer him to take? The former, I unhesitatingly replied.

The United States Ambassador was the first to recognize the Provisional Government officially on March 22, an achievement of which he was always very proud. I had, unfortunately, been laid up for a few days with a bad chill, and it was only on the afternoon of the 24th that I was allowed to get up and go with my French and Italian colleagues to the Ministry, where Prince Lvoff and all the members of his Government were waiting to receive us. As doyen, I had to make the first speech. After expressing my pleasure at entering into relations with them and assuring them of my support in all matters touching the strengthening of our alliance and the conduct of the war, I proceeded to say:

A cette heure solennelle où une nouvelle ère de progrès et de gloire s'ouvre devant la Russie, il est plus que jamais nécessaire de ne pas laisser détourner les yeux de l'Allemagne. Car le triomphe de l'Allemagne aura pour suite l'écroulement de ce beau monument, que le peuple Russe vient d'élever à la Liberté. La Grande Bretagne tend la main au Gouvernement Provisoire, persuadée que ce dernier, fidèle aux engagements pris par ses prédécesseurs, fera tout son possible pour mener la guerre à une fin victorieuse, en veillant surtout au maintien de l'ordre et de l'unité nationale, à la reprise du travail normal dans les usines et à l'enseignement et à la discipline de l'armée. Oui, Messieurs les

Ministres, si aujourd'hui j'ai l'honneur de vous apporter les salutations d'une nation amie et alliée, c'est parceque mon Gouvernement aime à croire que, sous votre haute direction, la Nouvelle Russie ne reculera devant aucun sacrifice at que, solidaire avec ses Alliés, elle ne deposera pas les armes avant que ces grands principes de droit et de justice, de liberté et de nationalité, dont nous avons pris la défense, soient fermement soutenus et établis.

After the other two Ambassadors had also spoken, Miliukoff, in the name of his colleagues, assured us that the Provisional Government were determined to uphold the agreements and alliances concluded with their predecessors and to continue the war to a victorious finish.

My speech was, on the whole, well received, though one journal warned me that I could not hold the same language to the representatives of free Russia as I had to "the minions of the Tsar."

Those of my readers who have had the patience to follow me through the successive stages of the Russian revolution down to our official recognition of the Provisional Government will, I trust, acquit me of the charge of having had any hand in bringing it about. Many people, nevertheless, still believe that I was the prime mover who pulled the strings and started it on its course. Ever since my return to England, at the beginning of 1918, this charge has fastened on me, and I have never been able to shake it off. Some of my former Russian friends still regard me with suspicion, and some have even turned their backs on me, as being indirectly responsible for the misfortunes that have befallen their country and their late Emperor.

The stories of my revolutionary activities are as

numerous as they are ridiculous. The two following will suffice as typical examples:

One day in the spring of 1919 I had gone to Marlborough House to see Arthur Davidson, one of my oldest and dearest friends, whose death so many of us deplore. He was telling me that certain exalted personages were inclined to credit some of these stories, when a Russian friend of mine, who was in attendance on the Empress Marie, came into the room. After exchanging greetings, I asked if he also suspected me of having been a revolutionary. "Well," he replied, "it is difficult not to believe it after what one has read in the papers." On my inquiring what the papers had been good enough to say about me, he continued: "I read in one paper that, when the victims of the revolution were buried in the Champ de Mars, you attended the funeral, accompanied by all your staff, in full uniform, that you made a speech belauding the revolution, and that you concluded by expressing the hope that England would at no distant date follow Russia's example and get rid of her King." "That," I replied, "is really the limit. If you Russians believe such a story, you will believe anything. Do you suppose that if I had made such a speech I should have been kept on at Petrograd as Ambassador, and should, on my return to London, have met with a most gracious reception on the part of my Sovereign?" He could not deny the force of this argument, and withdrew the charge.

The other story is still more humorous. It was told quite seriously at a luncheon party in London in 1918 by an ex-diplomat who is now dead, and was repeated to me by a lady who had been present. "Buchanan,"

the ex-diplomat said, "had found that German influence so dominated the Russian Court that the only hope of keeping Russia in the war and preventing a separate peace was to start a revolution. He accordingly got into touch with the extreme Socialists, and attended revolutionary meetings with a false nose and a false beard." As I could not speak Russian, such a disguise would hardly have proved effective.

Stories such as these do not call for further comment, but I cannot pass over in silence the more serious and specific charges brought against me in articles and letters which have been published in the Press of various countries. It will be sufficient for my purpose to take as my text one of the more recent of such articles, which, owing to the world-wide repute of the review in which it appeared, has attracted more general notice. My attention was first called to it by a gentleman who at one time held a high position in the French diplomatic service. He kindly came to ask me to tell him the truth about the part which I had played in the revolution, in order that he might be in a position to correct the unfavourable impression which the article in question had created in certain circles in Paris with regard to His Majesty's Government's Russian policy.

In June of last year the *Revue de Paris* published the first of a series of articles by Princess Paley, the widow of the Grand Duke Paul, entitled, "Mes Souvenirs de Russie." In it she makes the following statement:

L'Ambassade d'Angleterre, sur des ordres de Lloyd George, était devenue un foyer de propagande. Les Libéraux, Prince Lvoff, Miliukoff, Rodzianko, Maklakoff, Guchkoff, etc., s'y retrouvaient constamment. C'est à

l'Ambassade d'Angleterre qu'il fût decidé d'abandonner les voies légales et de s'engager dans le chemin de la Révolution. Il faut dire que, dans tout cela, Sir George Buchanan, Ambassadeur d'Angleterre à Pétrograd assouvissait des rancunes personelles. L'Empereur ne l'aimait pas et il etait avec lui de plus en plus froid, surtout depuis que l'Ambassadeur d'Angleterre frayait avec ses ennemis personnels. La dernière fois que Sir George demanda une Audience, l'Empereur le reçut debout, sans le prier de s'asseoir. Buchanan jura de se venger, et comme il était très lié avec un jeune couple grand-ducal, il eut un instant l'idée de faire une Révolution de Palais. Mais les événements dépassèrent ses prévisions et lui et Lady Georgina se détournèrent de leurs amis déchus sans la moindre pudeur. On racontait à Petersbourg, au début de la Révolution, que Lloyd George, apprenant la chute de Tsarisme en Russie, se frotta les mains en disant: "Un des buts de guerre de l'Angleterre est atteint."

That Princess Paley is gifted with a vivid imagination is no secret to me, and I can but congratulate her on this *chef-d'œuvre*. As I was looking over some old letters a few months ago I came across one which I had written to Lord Carnock in December, 1914, when he was Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with regard to the military situation on the Russian front. In it I spoke of the pessimism prevailing in certain quarters, and cited as an example a story to the effect that the Grand Duke Nicholas was in such a state of depression that he spent most of his time on his knees before his icons, declaring that God had abandoned him. I added that this story was a pure invention, and that it had been told me by Paléologue, who had been dining with Countess Hohenfelsen (as Princess Paley then was) in her palace at Tsarskoe, which was generally reputed to be a hotbed of gossip.

I am not therefore surprised that she should have so entirely misrepresented my conduct.

As I have no intention of sheltering myself behind any imaginary instructions from home, I may at once state that I accept the full responsibility for our attitude towards the revolution. It was on my advice that His Majesty's Government consistently acted. Needless to say, I never engaged in any revolutionary propaganda, and Mr. Lloyd George had our national interests far too much at heart ever to have authorized me to promote a revolution in Russia in the middle of a world war. It is perfectly true that I did receive at the Embassy the Liberal leaders named by Princess Paley, for it was my duty as Ambassador to keep in touch with the leaders of all parties. I was, moreover, in sympathy with their aims, and, as already stated, I consulted Rodzianko on the subject of those aims before my final audience with the Emperor. They did not want to provoke a revolution so long as the war lasted. On the contrary, they practised such patience and restraint that the Government regarded the Duma as a negligible quantity and imagined that they could go all lengths. When the revolution came, the Duma sought to control it by giving it the sanction of the only legally constituted organ in the country. The majority of its leaders were Monarchists. Rodzianko, up to the last, had hoped to save the Emperor by drafting a manifesto for him to sign granting a constitution. Guchkoff and Miliukoff had both supported the Grand Duke Michael's claim to the succession.

Maklakoff—one of the most brilliant of its orators—was also a Monarchist. I remember how, at a luncheon given later on by Tereschenko (the then

Foreign Minister) to Kerensky, he roused the latter's wrath by saying, "I have always been a Monarchist." "*Et maintenant?*" exclaimed Kerensky, pointing an indignant finger at him. Instead of replying, Maklakoff proceeded to denounce those who had cringed to the Emperor when he was all-powerful and who had declared themselves ardent Republicans when his star had set. I have nothing to reproach myself with for having cultivated the friendship of these men. They disappointed me, it is true, by failing, when the crisis came, to keep control of the situation; but they were, I must admit, confronted with colossal difficulties, and, unfortunately, they were none of them supermen. I would further remind Princess Paley that the real promoters of the revolution were people like Rasputin, Stürmer, Protopopoff, and Mme. Wyrobouwa. I was careful to keep them at a distance, while Mme. Wyrobouwa, who was directly responsible for the influence gained by Rasputin over the Empress, was, as well as, if I mistake not, other disciples of the saint, an honoured guest in her house. I have even been told that the Princess herself had at least one interview with Rasputin.

I will leave Princess Paley for a moment and briefly explain my attitude throughout the crisis. I had been at one with the Duma leaders in holding that the course of the military operations must not be compromised by any grave internal crisis; and it was in order to avert such a catastrophe that I repeatedly warned the Emperor of his danger. Apart, moreover, from purely military considerations, I believed that it was by a process of gradual evolution, and not by revolution, that Russia would find salvation. With her

millions of uneducated peasants she was not ripe for a sudden plunge into a parliamentary régime such as ours. Nor was I one of those who looked on a Republic as a panacea for all the ills from which she was suffering. Till education has permeated the Russian masses they will not be able to dispense with a strong ruler any more than their Slav ancestors, who, in the ninth century, invited the northern vikings to come and rule them, as their land lacked order. I was rather, as I once told the Emperor, in favour of what I termed a benevolent autocracy, combined with a policy of decentralization and devolution of authority. Self-government, in my opinion, had to begin at the bottom, and not at the top; and it was by learning to manage their provincial affairs that Russians would best qualify themselves for the task of administering the affairs of the Empire.

When once the revolution had swept away the whole Imperial edifice beyond all hope of reconstruction, when the Emperor, abandoned by all but a faithful few, had been forced to abdicate, when none of his countless subjects had raised a finger in his defence—what could an Allied Ambassador do but support the only Government capable of combating the subversive tendences of the Soviet and of fighting out the war to a finish? It was in the Provisional Government that the Emperor himself had seen the only hope for Russia, and, inspired by a pure and unselfish love of his country, he had, in his last Order of the Day, called on his troops to yield it implicit obedience. I gave it from the outset my loyal support; but my position was a difficult one, as I was regarded with some suspicion by the public on account of my former relations with

the Imperial family. It was Hugh Walpole, the head of our propaganda bureau, who, in calling my attention to this fact, begged me to show by the warmth of my language at some public meetings where I had to speak that I was wholeheartedly on the side of the revolution. I accordingly did so. But if I spoke with emotion about Russia's new-won liberty, that was already degenerating into licence, it was to render more palatable my subsequent appeal for the maintenance of discipline in the army, and for fighting, instead of fraternizing with, the Germans. My only thought was how to keep Russia in the war.

If, as my critics would have people believe, I really was responsible for the revolution, I can only say that my services were very ill-requited, for only a couple of months after its consummation I was categorically disavowed by the official organ of the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates. In an article published on May 26, 1917, that journal stated:

> In the early days of the Revolution the great change was regarded by many as the triumph of the War Party. From this point of view the Russian Revolution was said to be due to the intrigues of England, and the British Ambassador was named as the source of its inspiration. But neither by sentiment nor inclination is Sir George Buchanan guilty of the triumph of freedom in Russia.

Princess Paley, unlike my other critics, has rendered me one service for which I am grateful. I have often wondered what was the motive that prompted me to start the Russian revolution, and she is good enough to tell me. The Emperor did not like me—he had received me at my last audience standing—he had

never offered me a chair. What more natural than that after such treatment I should, *pour assouvir mes rancunes personelles*, try to bring about a palace revolution with the object of placing the Grand Duke Cyril on the throne, and that, on finding this impracticable, I should have *lâché* the Grand Duke and gone in for a revolution from below? I had hitherto been under the impression that, in spite of my outspoken language, the Emperor rather liked me—but I was evidently mistaken. Princess Paley was on such intimate terms with him that His Majesty would doubtless have confided to her his likes and dislikes as regarded the Ambassadors accredited to him. But what the Princess does not know is that, no matter what the Emperor may have thought of me, I was personally devoted to him, and it was the fear of the consequences of a possible palace revolution that made me warn him of the danger in which he stood of assassination.

I can forgive much to a lady who has suffered so cruelly—who has lost a husband and a most brilliant and attractive son through the Bolshevik revolution. She has my fullest sympathy. But I also have had my sorrows, and what I cannot pardon is her lack of feeling in accusing my dead wife of having *sans la moindre pudeur* turned her back on her fallen friends. My wife never turned her back on anyone who stood in need of help or sympathy. She might be alive to-day had she not, from the beginning of the war down to her last fatal illness, overtaxed her strength by ministering to the needs of Russians of every class of society, whether they were wounded soldiers or indigent refugees.

But as Princess Paley has cited a specific case and has accused my wife and me of having abandoned our

former friends, the Grand Duke and Grand Duchess Cyril, I will tell her what we really did. In one of the first conversations, which the French Ambassador and I had with him after the revolution, Miliukoff expressed the hope that we would refrain from seeing members of the Imperial family. I at once told him that I could not comply with this request. Many members of that family had shown me great kindness when they were all-powerful, and now that they were down I was not going to turn my back on them. I further warned him that the Grand Duchess Victoria (the wife of the Grand Duke Cyril) was a British Princess, and that, if necessary, I should take her under my protection. As it happened, she never stood in need of it, as the Grand Duke Cyril had been one of the first to recognize the revolution and to hoist the red flag. I subsequently went to see the Grand Duchess Xenia and my friend the Grand Duke Nicholas Michaelovich. I also, as well as my wife, paid several visits to the Grand Duchess Victoria, and my wife once took her out driving. After a few weeks the fact that I was in the habit of visiting members of the Imperial family became known, and, as the Press took up the question, I was given to understand that I must either renounce these visits or go. My wife, therefore, wrote to the Grand Duchess explaining that in my official capacity I had no choice but to comply with the wishes of the Provisional Government. Her Imperial Highness replied in a charming note, in which she said that she perfectly understood, and that she hoped that we might meet again under happier circumstances. I do not know who had in the meanwhile made mischief between us, but a year later, in an interview which he gave a

British journalist in Finland, the Grand Duke reproached me with having, after the revolution, given him and the Grand Duchess the cold shoulder—which, he was good enough to add, "was neither very nice nor brave of him." We were then in England, and, in spite of this utterly false and unfriendly statement, my wife, hearing that their children could not get proper food, sent out some cases of provisions. The only thanks which she got was the acknowledgment of their receipt by the nurse.

In a subsequent number of the same review Princess Paley makes the following statement:

Le Roi d'Angleterre, inquiet pour son Cousin Germain —l'Empereur—et pour sa famille, télégraphia aux Souverains par l'entremise de Buchanan, de partir au plus vite pour l'Angleterre, où la Famille trouverait un asile tranquille et sûr. Il ajoutait même que l'Empereur d'Allemagne faisait serment de ne pas faire attaquer par ses sous-marins le navire qui transporterait la Famille Impériale. Que fait Buchanan au reçu de la dépêche, qui était un ordre? Au lieu de la remettre au destinataire—comme c'était son devoir—il va consulter Milioukoff, qui lui conseille de ne pas donner suite à ce télégramme. La plus élémentaire honnêteté, surtout dans un "pays libre" était de remettre la dépêche à qui elle était destinée. Dans son journal 'Les dernières Nouvelles,' Miliukoff a avoué que tout cela était exact et que Sir George Buchanan l'avait fait sur sa demande "et par égard pour le Gouvernement provisoire."

Carried away by her feelings of personal animosity, Princess Paley has made a deliberate misstatement. I was never charged by the King to deliver to the Emperor a telegram urging him to leave at once for England. The only telegram which His Majesty addressed to the Emperor after his abdication was one

sent through General Hanbury Williams, our military representative at headquarters, in which not a word was said about his coming to England. As the Emperor had already left for Tsarskoe when this telegram reached Mohileff, General Hanbury Williams forwarded it to me, with the request that I would have it delivered to His Majesty. Now, the Emperor was virtually a prisoner in his palace, and I and my colleagues were debarred from holding any communication with him. The only course, therefore, open to me was to ask Miliukoff to have it at once handed to His Majesty. After consulting Prince Lvoff, Miliukoff agreed to do so. On the following day (March 25) he told me that, much to his regret, he was unable to give effect to his promise. The extremists, he said, were strongly opposed to the idea of the Emperor leaving Russia, and the Government were afraid that the King's words might be misinterpreted and used as an argument in favour of his detention. I objected that no political meaning could be read into the King's telegram. It was but natural that His Majesty should wish the Emperor to know that his thoughts were with him, and that the misfortunes which had befallen him would in no way alter the King's feelings of friendship and affection. Miliukoff said that he, personally, quite understood this, but that, as others might place a different construction on it, the telegram had better not be delivered at present.

I was subsequently instructed to take no further action in the matter.

As others besides Princess Paley have intimated that neither I nor His Majesty's Government did all that we might have done to get the Emperor

out of Russia, I will briefly state what we actually did do.

On March 21, while His Majesty was still at the Stavka, I asked Miliukoff whether it was true, as had been stated in the Press, that the Emperor had been arrested. He replied that this was not quite correct. His Majesty had been deprived of his liberty—a pretty euphemism—and would be brought to Tsarskoe under an escort furnished by General Alexeieff. I therefore reminded him that the Emperor was the King's near relative and intimate friend, adding that I should be glad to receive an assurance that every precaution would be taken for his safety. Miliukoff gave me this assurance. He was not, he said, in favour of the Emperor proceeding to the Crimea, as His Majesty had originally suggested, and would prefer that he should remain at Tsarskoe till his children had sufficiently recovered from the measles for the Imperial family to travel to England. He then asked whether we were making any arrangements for their reception. On my replying in the negative, he said that he was most anxious that the Emperor should leave Russia at once. He would, therefore, be grateful if His Majesty's Government would offer him an asylum in England, and if they would accompany this offer with an assurance that the Emperor would not be allowed to leave England during the war. I at once telegraphed to the Foreign Office for the necessary authorization. On March 23 I informed Miliukoff that the King and His Majesty's Government were happy to accede to the request of the Provisional Government, and to offer the Emperor and his family a refuge in England, of which they hoped that Their

Majesties would avail themselves for the duration of the war. In the event of this offer being accepted, the Russian Government would naturally, I added, have to make suitable provision for their maintenance. While assuring me that a liberal allowance would be made them, Miliukoff begged that the fact that the Provisional Government had taken the initiative in the matter should not be published. I subsequently expressed the hope that no time would be lost in arranging for Their Majesties' journey to Port Romanoff. We relied, I said, on the Provisional Government taking all the necessary measures for their protection, and I warned him that, if any mischance befell them, that Government would be discredited in the eyes of the civilized world. On March 26 Miliukoff told me that they had not yet broached the subject of this projected journey to the Emperor, as before doing so they wanted to overcome the opposition of the Soviet, and that Their Majesties could not in any case start till their children got better.

I more than once received assurances that there was no cause for anxiety on the Emperor's account, and there was nothing more that we could do. We had offered the Emperor an asylum, in compliance with the request of the Provisional Government; but as the opposition of the Soviet, which they were vainly hoping to overcome, grew stronger, they did not venture to assume the responsibility for the Emperor's departure, and receded from their original position. We also had our extremists to count with, and it was impossible for us to take the initiative without being suspected of ulterior motives. It would, moreover, have been useless for us to insist on the Emperor being allowed to

come to England, seeing that the workmen had threatened to pull up the rails in front of his train. We could take no steps to protect him on his journey to Port Romanoff. This duty devolved on the Provisional Government. But, as they were not masters in their own house, the whole project eventually fell through.

Since the publication of this chapter in the *Révue de Paris* on March 15, M. Miliukoff has entered a protest against the statement made in its concluding paragraph.

While adhering to all that I said in that statement, I would point out[1] that I did not call in question the good faith of the Provisional Government, nor suggest that they intentionally placed impediments in the way of the Emperor's departure. On the contrary, I made it clear that it was they who took the initiative in the matter by asking us to offer the Emperor and his family an asylum in England. We, on our part, at once complied with their request, and at the same time pressed them to make the necessary arrangements for the journey to Port Romanoff. More than this we could not do. Our offer remained open and was never withdrawn. If advantage was not taken of it, it was because the Provisional Government failed to overcome the opposition of the Soviet. They were not, as I asserted and as I repeat, masters in their own house.

The genesis and objects of Mr. Henderson's Mission, which M. Miliukoff cites as an indication of our changed attitude, are explained in Chapter XXVIII.

[1] Added to Chapter, April 25, 1923.

CHAPTER XXVI

1917

IT is difficult to say how many lives were lost in the "bloodless" revolution, but according to most accounts they were under a thousand. It was at Viborg and Cronstadt where the worst scenes were enacted. In both these places a number of officers of the army and of the fleet were either subjected to the most brutal treatment or massacred by the insurgents. In Petrograd, thanks to the measures taken by the Government, the town rapidly resumed its normal aspect and, in spite of the absence of any police force, order generally prevailed. This was especially noticeable on the occasion of the burial of the victims of the revolution in the Champ de Mars on April 5, when a never-ending procession filed past in the most perfect order from ten in the morning till late in the evening. There were in all but some two hundred coffins, and as each one was lowered into the grave a salute was fired from the fortress; but no priests officiated at the ceremony, which was divested of any religious character. Though the Government had, on assuming office, issued a proclamation calling on citizens and soldiers alike to present a united front to the enemy, and telling the latter that they must obey their officers, their efforts to ensure an energetic prosecution of the war were paralysed by the action of the Soviet. A

well-disciplined army was regarded by the majority of its members as a dangerous weapon that might be one day turned against the revolution, while the Bolsheviks foresaw that the break-up of the army would place at their disposal a mass of armed peasants and workmen who would help them to rise to power.

The impression which the new Ministers made on me when I went to convey to them our official recognition was not such as to inspire me with great confidence for the future. Most of them already showed signs of strain and struck me as having undertaken a task beyond their strength. Prince Lvoff had, as leader of the Zemstvos, done invaluable work in organizing subsidiary services for supplying the army with warm clothing and other things of which it stood in urgent need, and both he and his colleagues would have made excellent Ministers in more normal times. But the situation was the very reverse of normal, and in the impending struggle with the Soviet what was required was a man of action, prompt to seize the first favourable opportunity for suppressing that rival and illegally constituted assembly. There was no such man in the Government. Guchkoff, the Minister of War, was capable and energetic and fully alive to the necessity of restoring discipline in the army. But he could not carry his colleagues with him, and eventually resigned as a protest against their weakness. Miliukoff, staunch friend as he was of the Allies, advocated the strict observance of the treaties and agreements which the Imperial Government had concluded with them. He held that the acquisition of Constantinople was a matter of vital moment for Russia; but on this question he was almost in a minority of one in the Government.

As regarded the propaganda which the Socialists were carrying on at the front, Miliukoff was deplorably weak, contending that nothing could be done but to meet it with counter-propaganda. Kerensky was the only Minister whose personality, if not altogether sympathetic, had something arresting about it that did not fail to impress one. As an orator he possessed the magnetic touch which holds an audience spellbound, and in the earlier days of the revolution he unceasingly strove to instil into the workmen and soldiers some of his own patriotic fervour. But, while advocating fighting out the war to a finish, he deprecated any idea of conquest, and when Miliukoff spoke of the acquisition of Constantinople as one of Russia's war aims, he promptly disavowed him. With his hold on the masses, with his personal ascendancy over his colleagues, and in the absence of any qualified rival, Kerensky was the only man to whom we could look to keep Russia in the war. Tereschenko, the Minister of Finance, who subsequently became Minister for Foreign Affairs, was one of the most promising members of the new Government. Very young, an ardent patriot, brilliantly clever, and possessed of an unbounded faith in Kerensky, he was inclined to be too optimistic. I had a great personal regard for him, and we soon became friends. His mother was very rich, and he was supposed—though without cause—to have financed the revolution. An amusing story is told to the effect that when, after the Bolshevik revolution, Tereschenko, together with his colleagues, was imprisoned in the fortress, Schteglovitoff, the reactionary Minister of Justice, and a fellow-prisoner, meeting him in the exercising yard, remarked, "You paid five million

roubles to come here. I would have sent you here for nothing."

Having now introduced my readers to the more important members of the Provisional Government, I propose, in order to make them better acquainted with these gentlemen as well as with my personal impressions of an ever fluctuating situation, to give extracts from some of my private letters to the Foreign Office :

April 2.

"There has been a cleavage in the Soviet, and the Socialist-pacifist elements are losing ground. The troops as a whole are said to be in favour of continuing the war, and even the Socialists declare that they will only fraternize with the German Socialists if the latter dethrone the Hohenzollerns. Work is being resumed in the factories, but, owing to many engineers and foremen having been dismissed, the output is much less than it was. The most striking feature of the situation is the perfect order that reigns in the town. It is only in the trams and in the railway trains, where the soldiers force their way into the best seats without paying for them, that there is any real disorder. In certain country districts, however, the peasants have been cutting down the woods of the landed proprietors and are talking of dividing up their lands. But, so far as I am aware, there has been no incendiarism nor anything in the shape of an organized *Jacquerie*."

April 9.

"The Socialistic propaganda in the army continues, and though I miss no opportunity of impressing on Ministers the disastrous consequences of this subver-

sion of discipline, they appear to be powerless to prevent it. Not only are the relations of officers and men most unsatisfactory, but numbers of the latter are returning home without leave. In some cases they have been prompted to do so by reports of an approaching division of the land and by the desire to be on the spot to secure their share of the spoils. I do not wish to be pessimistic, but unless matters improve we shall probably hear of some serious disaster as soon as the Germans decide to take the offensive.

"The Russian idea of liberty is to take things easily, to claim double wages, to demonstrate in the streets, and to waste time in talking and in passing resolutions at public meetings. Ministers are working themselves to death, and have the best intentions; but, though I am always being told that their position is becoming stronger, I see no signs of their asserting their authority. The Soviet continues to act as if it were the Government and has been trying to force Ministers to approach the Allied Governments on the subject of peace.

"Kerensky, with whom I had a long conversation yesterday, does not favour the idea of taking strong measures at present, either against the Soviet or the Socialist propaganda in the army. On my telling him that the Government would never be masters of the situation so long as they allowed themselves to be dictated to by a rival organization, he said that the Soviet would die a natural death, that the present agitation in the army would pass, and that the army would then be in a better position to help the Allies to win the war than it would have been under the old régime.

"Russia, he declared, was in favour of what he termed a war of defence, as opposed to a war of aggression, though a military offensive might be necessary to secure the objects of such a war. The presence of two great democracies in the war might eventually cause the Allies to modify their ideas about the terms of peace, and he spoke of an ideal peace as one 'that would secure to every nation the right to determine its own destiny.' I told him that the reply which we had returned to President Wilson's note showed that we were not fighting for conquest, but for principles which ought to appeal to Russian democracy. The question as to whether effect was to be given to the Constantinople agreement—about which he and Miliukoff held such opposite views—was a question for Russia to decide. Kerensky next spoke of the hopes which he entertained of influencing the German Social Democrats through the Russian Socialists, contending that Russia had brought a new force into the war which, by reacting on the internal situation in Germany, might bring about a durable peace. He admitted, however, that if these hopes proved fallacious we should have to fight on till Germany yielded to the will of Europe.

"It is a misfortune that Petrograd is the seat of Government, as at Moscow and in the provinces the situation is more encouraging, and I fancy that the majority of the nation is as sick of their present capital as I am. It is only here in Petrograd, where there are any number of German agents, that attacks have been made on us in the Press of the extreme Labour party. Otherwise, the general feeling of the country towards us is excellent. There was a great demonstration of some four thousand Cossacks before the Embassy

a few days ago. The general in command of these regiments had originally asked me to come and review them on the Champ de Mars, and had kindly offered to place a 'quiet' horse at my disposal. I had to tell him that this was an honour which I, as Ambassador, could not accept, so it was arranged that the regiments should march past the Embassy instead, while I watched them from the balcony. After the march past the commander, with a delegation of some fifty Cossacks, came up to my study and made a patriotic speech in favour of continuing the war.

"Last Saturday I and my French and Italian colleagues were invited to attend a performance at the Opera House that had been organized by the regiment which is credited with having made the revolution, on account of its having been the first to side with the people. We sat in one of the Imperial boxes on the grand tier, while the Government were in a box just opposite us. The central box was occupied by revolutionaries who had returned, after long years of exile, from Siberia. They included Vera Figner, who was sentenced as an accomplice in the assassination of Alexander II, and Vera Zasoulich, who made an attempt on Trepoff's life in 1877. After paying a visit, in one of the *entr'actes*, to the Ministers, we were taken to the central box and introduced to its occupants. No one would have conceived such a thing possible a couple of months ago."

April 10. (To Lord Milner.)

"What a transformation scene we have witnessed here since you left! Though I was prepared for something unexpected happening, I never imagined that the

Empire would crumble to pieces in a few days at the first breath of revolution. . . .

"The military outlook is most discouraging, and I, personally, have abandoned all hope of a successful Russian offensive in the spring. Nor do I take an optimistic view of the immediate future of this country. Russia is not ripe for a purely democratic form of government, and for the next few years we shall probably see a series of revolutions and counter-revolutions, as in the 'troublous times' nearly five hundred years ago. As an old literary lady wrote me the other day, 'Russia is like a Slav woman who loves the man in whom she finds a master and who, in the words of an old peasant song, asks her husband if he does not love her any more when he no longer beats her out of jealousy.' The Emperor was too weak to be respected as a master, while he was blind to the fact that the time for concessions had come. A vast Empire like this, with all its different races, will not long hold together under a Republic. Disintegration will, in my opinion, sooner or later set in, even under a federal system. The Russian people are very religious, but their religion is one of symbols and ceremonies, and in their political life they look for symbols also. They must have as chief of the State some figurehead whom they can look up to with feelings of reverence as the personification of their national ideals."

April 16.

"I yesterday went to see Prince Lvoff, whom I found in a very optimistic mood. On my calling his serious attention to the state of the army, he asked me the reasons for my pessimism. I told him that while

Ministers were constantly assuring me that the army would now render us far greater services than it had under the Empire, our military attachés, who had visited the Petrograd regiments and talked to officers returned from the front, took the contrary view. From what they told me I feared that, unless steps were at once taken to stop the visits of Socialist agitators to the front, the army would never be able to play an effective part in the war. I was also much preoccupied by the fact that the Government seemed powerless to shake off the control of the Committee of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies. Lvoff reassured me by declaring that the only two weak points on the front were Dvinsk and Riga. The army as a whole was sound, and any attempts made by agitators to subvert its discipline would meet with no success. The Government could count on the support of the army, and even the Petrograd garrison had, like the troops at the front, offered to suppress the Workmen's Council. This, he added, was an offer which the Government could not accept without exposing themselves to the charge of planning a counter-revolution.

"I cannot share the optimism with which Prince Lvoff and his colleagues regard the situation. The revolution has put the machinery of government temporarily out of gear, and disorganization reigns in many of the administrative services. There is but little enthusiasm for the war, and the Socialist propaganda is being reinforced by the arrival of fresh Anarchists from abroad. I am only speaking of Petrograd, but Petrograd at present rules Russia and is likely to do so for some time to come.

"Referring to the phrase, 'Peace without annexation,' in the resolution passed by the Workmen's Congress, Lvoff remarked that it was open to any interpretation which we liked to put on it, such as liberation from the enemy's yoke.

"I had a long conversation with O'Grady and Thorne—our two Labour delegates—on Saturday. They made an excellent impression on me, and I hope that they may be able to do some good. The extreme Socialists, however, are not very amenable to foreign influence."

Among the recently arrived Anarchists to whom reference is made in the above letter was Lenin, who had travelled in a sealed carriage through Germany. He made his first public appearance at a meeting of the Social Democratic party, and was badly received. He installed himself, without permission and without the Government taking any steps to prevent him, in the palace of the well-known *danseuse*, Kchessinskaia, and as we drove to the islands in the afternoon we sometimes saw him or one of his followers addressing a crowd from the balcony.

April 23.

"On several points on the front the German soldiers are fraternizing with the Russians, and trying to complete the work begun by the Socialists by urging them to kill their officers. But, disquieting as is the state of the army, I fear that, were we to take collective action here and to threaten to stop the despatch of all war material unless the subversive propaganda is at once suppressed, we should only be playing into the

hands of the Socialists, who would contend that Russia, being left without munitions by the Allies, had no choice but to make peace.

"Kerensky dined at the Embassy last night to meet Thorne and O'Grady, and in a long conversation I told him quite frankly why my confidence in the army, and even in the Provisional Government, was shaken. He admitted the accuracy of the facts which I cited, but said that he knew his people and that he only hoped that the Germans would not delay taking the offensive, as, when once the fighting began, the army would pull itself together. He wanted, he said, to make the war a national one, as it was in England and France. He saw no danger of the Provisional Government being overthrown, as only a small minority of the troops were on the side of the Soviet. He added that the Communistic doctrines preached by Lenin have made the Socialists lose ground.

"It will be best for us, at present, to confine our action to individual representations on the part of the Allied Ambassadors. If the results of the fighting should show that the army has been demoralized, we must then have recourse to some collective action.

"Tereschenko told me this morning that the Soviet has been so frightened by Lenin's anarchist speeches that they are becoming more amenable.

"I had some conversation with him about Constantinople. He had, he said, never been a partisan of its permanent occupation by Russia, as it would prove a white elephant and have to be held by a large garrison. He would like to see it made an open port, over which Russia should be given some controlling

power. He told me that I was wrong in supposing that Prince Lvoff, like Miliukoff, favoured annexation, but added—to my surprise—that the present Government was in some respects quite as nationalist as the late Imperial Government. There were, he then said, other Turkish provinces, like Armenia and Kurdistan, which were of vital interest to Russia. He evidently shares Kerensky's view that our agreements about Asia Minor ought to be considerably modified, and that the end and aim of all our arrangements about Asia Minor ought to be to bar all possibility of future German penetration. On my remarking that if Russia did not want Constantinople the sooner that she said so the better, he replied that it was not within the competence of the Provisional Government to abandon what Russia had been promised until they had ascertained the wishes of the people on the subject.

"Tereschenko is very intelligent and anxious to help us as regards the despatch of the wheat and timber promised. I am on the best of terms with him, and am gradually also making friends with Kerensky, who was at first rather suspicious of my real sentiments about the revolution. Unfortunately, he can talk but little French, but when he dined at the Embassy, Lockhart (our consul-general at Moscow), who talks Russian fluently, acted as our interpreter, and we had a long and straight talk. He told me on leaving that our conversation would bear fruit. I was rather amused at his coming to dinner accompanied by his *officier d'ordonnance*, whom I had not invited. It was a curious proceeding on the part of a Socialist Minister who never wears anything but an ordinary workman's black jacket."

April 30.

"A battle royal is being fought between Kerensky and Miliukoff on the famous formula, 'Peace without annexations,' and as the majority of the Ministers are on Kerensky's side, I should not be surprised if Miliukoff has to go. He would be a loss in many ways, as he represents the moderate element in the Cabinet and is quite sound on the subject of the war, but he has so little influence with his colleagues that one never knows whether he will be able to give effect to what he says.

"The Government is still playing a waiting game, and prefers that the initiative in dealing with Lenin should come from the people. Miliukoff, with whom I discussed the question the other day, said that the popular feeling against Lenin was growing, that the troops were ready to arrest him whenever the Government gave the word, but that the latter did not wish to precipitate matters for fear of provoking civil strife. I told him that the time had come for the Government to act, and that Russia would never win the war if Lenin was allowed to go on inciting soldiers to desert, to seize the land, and to murder. He replied that the Government were but waiting for the psychological moment, which was not, he thought, far distant. Miliukoff also spoke more hopefully of the relative positions of the Provisional Government and the Soviet. The latter is being completely reorganized. Its members have been reduced to six hundred, and a new executive committee has been appointed. The effect of this reorganization will be to render it a more moderate, but at the same time a stronger, body. It is not therefore likely to renounce its

claim to control and direct the policy of the Government.

"In view of the military situation on the front and of the new moral element brought into the field by the revolution, I, personally, think that we shall have to consent to the revision of some of our agreements. I am anxious to conciliate the Labour party and the Socialists, who are constantly attacking us for wishing to continue the war for imperialistic ends. I have in my speeches tried to disillusion them of this idea, but without much success. I have also endeavoured to explain that it was not on account of their political opinions, but on account of the want of transport, that some of the Russian political refugees have been prevented returning to Russia. My statements have but exposed me to fresh attacks, while the Socialist Press is accusing our Labour delegates of being the paid emissaries of our Government and not the real representatives of British Labour."

I must supplement what I said at the end of this letter by a short explanatory statement. The attacks made against us in the Press on account of our detention of Russian political refugees had taken such a serious turn that they were even endangering the lives of some of the British factory owners, whose position was already anything but secure owing to the uncertain attitude of the workmen. I had, therefore, to speak seriously to Miliukoff and to request him to take steps to put an end to this Press campaign. On his replying that the Russian Government was being similarly attacked, I said that that was not my concern, and that I could not allow my Government to be used as

a lightning conductor to divert the attacks made on his Government. I then reminded him that I had, early in April, informed him that Trotzky and other Russian political refugees were being detained at Halifax until the wishes of the Provisional Government with regard to them had been ascertained. On April 8 I had, at his request, asked my Government to release them and to allow them to proceed on their journey to Russia. Two days later he had begged me to cancel this request and to say that the Provisional Government hoped they would be detained at Halifax until further information had been obtained about them. It was the Provisional Government, therefore, that was responsible for their further detention till April 21, and I should have to make this fact public unless a statement was published to the effect that we had not refused *visas* to the passports of any Russians presented by the Russian consular authorities. This he consented to do.

The attacks on our Labour delegates had been inspired by a message sent to a Russian Socialist by a member of the Independent Labour Party in London. The matter was eventually put right by Mr. Hyndman, who requested Kerensky by telegraph to "contradict most emphatically lying statement of the I.L.P."

CHAPTER XXVII

1917

I WILL begin the present chapter with a few further extracts from my letters to the Foreign Office.

May 7.

"Since I last wrote we have passed through another crisis, provoked by Miliukoff's note to the Allied Governments on the subject of the war. That note was the result of a compromise between Kerensky's and Miliukoff's supporters. It was accepted and approved by the former in return for the consent of the latter to the communication to the Allies of the Government's proclamation disavowing all ideas of the acquisition of territory by force. Miliukoff has throughout contended that Russia must acquire possession both of Constantinople and the Straits, and for this reason, as well as out of regard for the engagements already entered into by Russia with the Allies, has persistently refused to suggest a revision of existing agreements. He held that to communicate to the Allied Governments the proclamation addressed to the Russian people was an indirect way of inviting them to reconsider their agreements. There was a regular duel between him and Kerensky, and at one moment his position was so shaken that it almost looked as if he would have to go. The Cadet party, of which he is the leader, came to

the rescue and brought pressure to bear on the Government by threatening that Miliukoff's resignation would be followed by that of all the other members of the Government who belong to that party.

"In the end Miliukoff agreed to communicate the proclamation, while the Government approved his covering note. The latter was couched in language which, if it did not actually contravene the letter of the proclamation, was an unquestionable contravention of its spirit. It raised a perfect storm in the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies, where it was regarded as a revocation of all that had been said in the proclamation. Thursday was a very critical day. In the afternoon a number of regiments marched to the space in front of the Palais Marie, where the Council of Ministers sits, and joined the crowd that had already assembled there to demonstrate against the Government. Cries of 'Down with the Government,' 'Down with Miliukoff,' were raised, but eventually the troops were persuaded to return to their barracks.

"Later in the evening there were counter-demonstrations directed chiefly against Lenin and his adherents, and after several Ministers had addressed the crowd from the balcony of the palace the tide turned in their favour. The Government remained firm, declaring its complete solidarity on the subject of the note; and the threat that they would resign *en bloc* and that, if they did so, a new Provisional Government would be formed at Moscow, caused the council to pour water into their wine. The council, moreover, were aware, as they subsequently admitted, that they were not themselves strong enough to form an administra-

tion, and, on the Government consenting to publish an explanatory *communiqué* on the subject of the note, they declared the incident closed. This agreement was only reached on Friday evening, and during the whole of that afternoon the Nevski and adjoining streets were the scenes of demonstrations and counter-demonstrations. A collision took place on the Nevski between a pro-Lenin and an anti-Lenin crowd, in which several persons were killed and wounded. Between 9 and 10.30 P.M. I had to go out three times on the balcony of the Embassy to receive ovations and to address crowds who were demonstrating for the Government and the Allies. During one of them a free fight took place between the supporters of the Government and the Leninites.

"All is quiet again now and demonstrations have been forbidden for a couple of days. Miliukoff is naturally much elated at what he terms a great victory for the Government; but though the Government is no doubt to be congratulated on the result of its conflict with the council, the latter continues to act as if it were master of the situation.

"Since writing the above I have had a conversation with Tereschenko. In reply to a question of mine, he said that he did not share Miliukoff's view that the result of the recent conflict between the council and the Government was a great victory for the latter. It had been a moral victory, and fortunately it was the opponents and not the supporters of the Government who were responsible for the bloodshed. It had also demonstrated the numerical superiority of those who had sided with the Government. Against this must be set off the vindication by the council of its exclusive

right to give orders to the troops. The Government, he told me, were taking steps to counteract this by increasing the powers of General Korniloff, who is in command of the Petrograd garrison, and he was confident that they would eventually become masters of the situation, though they might have to admit into their ranks one or two Socialists. The workmen were getting disgusted with Lenin, and the latter would, he hoped, be arrested at no distant date.

"He was, he said, most anxious to see peace negotiations opened with Turkey, and, if Constantinople was the only bar to such a peace, he thought that His Majesty's Government might approach the Russian Government with a proposal for its neutralization. I said that were we to do so we should lay ourselves open to the charge of ill-faith, and under present conditions it would be difficult for either Russia or the Allies to propose a revision of their respective agreements. He admitted this, but contended that, with the exercise of a little tact, an exchange of views on the subject of Constantinople might be invited."

May 7.

"I told Kerensky, who came to see me to-day, how discouraged I was by the attacks of the Press that kept on accusing us of waging a capitalist or imperialistic war. Kerensky admitted that some of these attacks had gone too far, but contended that the Government could not violate the principle of freedom of the Press. The extreme left, he said, believed that the German Social Democrats were on the point of revolt, and though, after Scheidemann's recent declaration, he did not personally think this likely, the

Germans might, nevertheless, make overtures of peace at any moment. The Allies ought, therefore, to enter into an exchange of views so as to be in a position to state their terms when the time came. If only, he continued, they would make some gesture indicative of their readiness to follow the example set by Russia's renunciation of Constantinople, all these Press attacks would at once cease. On my remarking that Miliukoff had given me to understand that he was determined to keep Constantinople, Kerensky remarked that Miliukoff would not have the deciding voice in the matter."

The Government took a step in the right direction on May 9 by announcing that the right to dispose of the troops was vested exclusively in the military governor of the town. On the same day the Foreign Office handed the Russian *chargé d'affaires* in London our reply to Miliukoff's famous note that had been the cause of the recent crisis. We welcomed that note as showing that Russia would not relax her glorious efforts to defend, with her allies, the cause of justice and humanity. We further noted with satisfaction that the Provisional Government, while safeguarding Russia's rights, would strictly respect their engagements towards their allies.

On *May* 21 I wrote as follows to the Foreign Office :

" The last two weeks have been very anxious ones, as the victory which the Government had won over the Soviet in the matter of the note to the Powers was not nearly so complete as Miliukoff had imagined. So long as the Soviet maintained its exclusive right to

dispose of the troops, the Government, as Prince Lvoff remarked, was 'an authority without power,' while the Workmen's Council was 'a power without authority.' Under such conditions it was impossible for Guchkoff, as Minister of War, and for Korniloff, as military governor of Petrograd, to accept responsibility for the maintenance of discipline in the army. They both, consequently, resigned, while the former declared that if things were to continue as they were the army would cease to exist as a fighting force in three weeks' time. Guchkoff's resignation precipitated matters, and Lvoff, Kerensky and Tereschenko came to the conclusion that, as the Soviet was too powerful a factor to be either suppressed or disregarded, the only way of putting an end to the anomaly of a dual Government was to form a Coalition. Though this idea did not at first find favour with the Soviet, it was eventually agreed that the latter should be represented in the Government by three delegates—Tseretelli, Chernoff and Scobeleff. Miliukoff was at headquarters when the crisis broke out, and he had on his return to choose between accepting the post of Minister of Education or leaving the Cabinet. After a vain struggle to retain charge of the Foreign Office he tendered his resignation.

"Though the more moderate section of the Government, with which I am naturally in sympathy, will be weakened by Miliukoff's and Guchkoff's departure, their loss will, I think, be compensated by gains in other directions. The former is so obsessed by one idea—Constantinople, which to the Socialists represents the imperialistic policy of the old régime—that he has never voiced the views of the Government as a whole; and I personally prefer to deal with someone who, even

if he does not see eye to eye with us, can speak with authority as the exponent of the Government's policy. Guchkoff, on the other hand, suffers from a weak heart and is hardly up to his work. His views with regard to discipline in the army are very sound, but he has been unable to impose them on his colleagues. He has not, moreover, any hold on the masses—the principal factor—as he lacks Kerensky's gift of personal magnetism. The new Coalition Government, as I have already telegraphed, offers us the last and almost forlorn hope of saving the military situation on this front. Kerensky, who assumes charge of both the War Office and the Admiralty, is not an ideal War Minister, but he hopes, by going to the front and making passionate appeals to the patriotism of the soldiers, to be able to galvanize the army into new life. He is the only man who can do it if it can be done, but his task will be a very difficult one. The Russian soldier of to-day does not understand for what or for whom he is fighting. He was ready formerly to lay down his life for the Tsar, who in his eyes impersonated Russia; but now that the Tsar has gone Russia means nothing to him beyond his own village. Kerensky has begun by telling the army that he is going to re-establish the strictest discipline, to insist on his orders being obeyed, and to punish all recalcitrants. He has been going round the barracks to-day, and to-morrow he leaves for the front to prepare for the coming offensive.

"Tereschenko, who has succeeded Miliukoff at the Foreign Office, has made a good start by his tactful treatment of the delicate question of our agreements in his statement to the Press. He serves as a link between the *bourgeoisie* and the democracy, though he

is not liked by the extremists. If our reply to Miliukoff's note is published in its present form there is certain to be friction, and the Soviet will try to force his hands. After discussing the question with Albert Thomas, I think that we ought to forestall any action of this kind by ourselves making some conciliatory but non-committal statement on the subject. We have got to face the fact that Socialism is now dominant and that, if we are to enlist its support in favour of a fight to a finish, we must try to win its sympathies. The new Socialist Ministers will naturally be apprised of the contents of Russia's secret agreements, and if the Russian soldiers are told that they must go on fighting till the objects of those agreements have been realized they will demand a separate peace. I would therefore suggest the addition of a paragraph in our reply explaining that our agreements with regard to Asia Minor were inspired by the idea of barring the road to German penetration, but that, if this object can be attained by other means, we would be prepared to re-examine the question as soon as an opportune moment arrived for an exchange of views on the eventual conditions of peace.

"Prince Lvoff is unwell, but as soon as he can see me I propose to call his attention to the disgraceful treatment to which the Empress Marie has been subjected in the Crimea. From a message which Her Majesty sent me through the Swiss tutor of the Grand Duchess Xenia's children, it seems that, about ten days ago, two Roumanian men-of-war, manned by Russian sailors, arrived at Yalta about three o'clock in the morning. After visiting and making perquisitions in several houses, they went to the Grand Duchess

Xenia's villa, where the Empress is staying, between five and six o'clock. They entered Her Majesty's bedroom, told her to get up, refused to let her send for her maid, saying that the woman whom they had brought with them to search her would help her to dress. When the Empress had put on a dressing-gown they proceeded to search her bed and mattress, while she sat in an armchair. They ransacked the whole house, taking away all her private correspondence as well as a Danish Gospel. They treated the Grand Duchess and her children in much the same way and stole some of her rings and silver. They also perquisitioned the villa of the Grand Duke Nicholas. I have not yet been able to ascertain whether these perquisitions were made by anyone in authority or whether the sailors, who had been led to believe that there was a wireless telegraphic station in one of these villas and that arms were concealed in them for a counter-revolution, had taken the law into their own hands."

I subsequently made strong representations to several members of the Government on the subject of this outrage, and a special commissary was sent to Yalta to inquire into and report on the whole matter. But anxious as they really were to provide for her protection, the situation in many of the provinces had already got beyond their control, and in the distant Crimea their writ did not run. During the remainder of her stay there the Empress's life was in constant jeopardy, more especially after the November revolution. But Her Majesty's extraordinary courage and self-possession never failed her, as the following incident will show. In order to maintain a strict control over

the movements of all the inhabitants of the villa, the Bolsheviks had instituted a roll-call, which the former were obliged to attend every evening. The Empress's name was the last on the roll, and on Her Majesty answering "Present," the commissary remarked, "That's the last of them?" The Empress at once corrected him. "No. I am not the last. You have forgotten my little dog."

One unfortunate result of the reconstruction of the Government was the cancelling of Sazonoff's appointment as Ambassador in London. Sazonoff was so identified with the policy of the Imperial Government, more especially as regarded the question of Constantinople, that he was no longer considered a suitable representative of the new Russia. In telling me this, Tereschenko explained that, as he hoped to retain his services for the final peace negotiations, he was anxious that Sazonoff should not undertake a mission that might sooner or later discredit him in the eyes of the Russian public. He was to have left for London on May 16 together with our Labour delegates and Paléologue, who was being replaced at the French Embassy by Noulens, and it was only on arriving at the station that he was handed a letter from Prince Lvoff requesting him to postpone his departure. Though several names were subsequently submitted to our Government, no Ambassador was ever appointed, and during the rest of the war M. Nabokoff continued to act as *chargé d'affaires*.

In Paléologue I lost an old friend and colleague with whom, during three critical years, I had been closely associated and on whose loyal collaboration in furthering the common interests, which we both had

so much at heart, I could always count. I was also very sorry to say good-bye to my new friends Will Thorne and James O'Grady. They were such splendid types of the British working man that I had hoped that they would have impressed the workmen's delegates in the Soviet and made them understand that we were not fighting the Germans for imperialistic or capitalist aims. But those delegates were not real working men. They were only demagogues. As O'Grady said to Thorne on their first visit to the Soviet: "Look at their hands! Not one of them has done an honest day's work in his life!" They left Petrograd much depressed by their experiences both at the front and in the rear. We had seen a great deal of them during their stay, and I shall never forget the charming little speech which Will Thorne made the last night they dined with us as he drank to our healths after dinner in the drawing-room in his favourite whisky-and-water.

On going one afternoon towards the end of the month to call on Tereschenko, I found him in conference with the three new Socialist Ministers—Tseretelli, Chernoff and Scobeleff—who had later in the day to attend a meeting of the Soviet to give an account of their stewardship. Hearing that I was there, they expressed the wish to see me, and I was accordingly invited to join them. After I had been introduced by Tereschenko, Tseretelli, who acted throughout as spokesman, proceeded to catechize me for nearly two hours on various matters connected with the revolution, the war and our agreements. Had the revolution, he asked, had any repercussion in England; was it likely to bring the views of the British and Russian demo-

cracies into harmony, more especially as regarded the war; and did His Majesty's Government really represent British public opinion? I replied that a great revolution like that through which Russia had just passed could not fail to react on all countries to a greater or less extent, and that, as it would certainly exercise a democratizing influence on British public opinion, it would tend to bring our views into closer touch with those of the Russian people. Though we had retained the monarchical system, we were the freest people in the world, and we had long since adopted the maxim, "*Vox populi suprema lex.*" I could assure him that no British Government could retain office that did not represent public opinion.

Turning next to the question of our agreements, he inquired whether, if Russia were to renounce any of the advantages which would accrue to her under them, His Majesty's Government would be prepared to do the same.

In reply to this question I cited the revised text of our above-mentioned note, which I had been authorized to hand Tereschenko only two days previously, stating that, though we considered that there was nothing in those agreements that was opposed to the principles proclaimed by the Russian democracy, we were prepared to re-examine them in concert with our Allies and, if necessary, to revise them. This statement caused him the greatest satisfaction.

The Allied democracies, he then proceeded to say, ought to come to a complete agreement on the subject of their war aims and of their eventual peace terms. Would His Majesty's Government consent to a conference for this purpose?

This, I replied, was a question which I could not answer without consulting my Government, and, on his then pressing me for my personal views, I said that the statement which I had just made to him showed that we were prepared to take a considerable step in the direction which he had indicated. Such a re-examination of our agreements would necessarily entail an exchange of views, but my Government might prefer to conduct the negotiations through its Ambassadors in the Allied capitals instead of at a conference.

Tseretelli next spoke of the necessity of maintaining the closest contact between our two democracies by means of an exchange of visits between the representatives of the various Labour and Socialist groups in each country.

This wish, I assured him, was cordially shared by His Majesty's Government, and I could tell him that Mr. Henderson, who represented our Labour party in the Cabinet, was already on his way to Petrograd on a special mission. That, he replied, was quite satisfactory; but it was generally believed here that His Majesty's Government would not allow representatives of other groups like Mr. Ramsay Macdonald to come. Would I authorize him to tell the Soviet that this was not the case, and that His Majesty's Government would, on the contrary, give Mr. Macdonald every facility? I could not, I said, give him such an assurance, but I would report what he had said to my Government. I would be quite frank with him. When the question of Mr. Macdonald's coming to Petrograd had been first raised by the Soviet I had opposed it, as I was afraid that his visit might encourage the Pacifist movement. From what M. Vandervelde and Mr.

O'Grady had since told me about Mr. Macdonald's views, I had changed my opinion and, as I now believed that his visit might do good, I would give his proposal my support.

The last question raised by Tseretelli was that of detaching the German Socialists from their Government. I told him at once that this was, in my opinion, a Utopian idea. The German people had so identified themselves with their Government, both as regarded the latter's annexation policy and its ruthless methods of warfare, that it was only by military pressure or by the blockade that we should ever make them rise against their Government. Chernoff here intervened with the remark that the revolution had at one time been regarded as a Utopian idea and that it had, nevertheless, been realized. I disputed the correctness of this assertion, saying that it had only come sooner than had been expected. Tseretelli then said that the reason why he wanted the Allied and Russian Socialists to go to Stockholm was in order that they might tell the Germans to their faces that if they did not make civil war on their Government we should discard them altogether. On my asking him, as I was leaving, whether the Government could count on the Soviet's support for the prosecution of the war, he replied in the affirmative. The Soviet, he said, wanted the democratization, not the demoralization, of the army.

A few days later I received the following telegram from Lord Robert Cecil, who was then in charge of the Foreign Office, with reference to the above conversation: "Your Excellency spoke with great courage and discretion under very difficult circumstances. I desire to express my warm approval."

Of the three Socialist Ministers Tseretelli, who was Minister for Posts and Telegraphs, alone impressed me favourably. A Georgian, of a princely family, and the leader of the Social Democrats, he had, under the Empire, spent several years in Siberia under a sentence of hard labour. With a refined and sympathetic personality, he attracted me by his transparent honesty of purpose and his straightforward manner. He was, like so many other Russian Socialists, an Idealist; but, though I do not reproach him with this, he made the mistake of approaching grave problems of practical politics from a purely theoretical standpoint. There was nothing of the Idealist about his two colleagues. Scobeleff, the Minister of Labour, was also a Social Democrat, who held very advanced views as to the rights of workmen in the factories. Of a nervous, excitable temperament and not overburdened with brains, he was rather insignificant in appearance and did not strike me as a man who would ever make his mark. Tchernoff, the Minister of Agriculture, had, on the other hand, the appearance of a man of strong character and considerable ability. He belonged to the advanced wing of the Social Revolutionary party, and advocated the immediate nationalization of the land and its division among the peasants without awaiting the decision of the Constituent Assembly. He was generally regarded as dangerous and untrustworthy, and I found him the reverse of sympathetic. He had been among the Russian refugees detained at Halifax —a fact of which he was careful to remind me.

Before proceeding farther, I had better perhaps say a few words respecting the views and aims of

the different political groups. The so-called *bourgeois* party was represented, in the main, by the Cadets and, in a lesser degree, by certain Moscow industrial groups. They advocated an energetic prosecution of the war and the restoration of discipline in the army, while they were in favour of leaving the solution of the various social and constitutional questions raised by the revolution to the final decision of the Constituent Assembly. They did not, however, wish that assembly to meet till after the local elections for the newly organized Zemstvos and town councils had provided the necessary machinery for organizing and controlling the general elections.

Of the Socialist groups, the Social Revolutionaries, of whom Kerensky was the leader, were agrarian, in contradistinction to the Social Democrats, who, under the leadership of Tseretelli, represented the interests of the proletariats of the towns. Their watchword had always been, "Land and Liberty." During the latter part of the last and the commencement of the present century they had adopted terrorism as a weapon for attaining their ends. After the murder of the Grand Duke Serge in 1905 terroristic methods had been suspended, and political assassinations, such as that of Stolypin in 1911, had been the exception rather than the rule. The Social Democrats, on the other hand, had, after the conference held in London in 1903—at which the Leninites outvoted their opponents on the question of the party organization—been split up into Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, or Minority and Majority Socialists, though moderates and extremists would have been a more appropriate term. The former, like most of the Social Revolutionaries, had advocated

collaboration with the advanced Liberals for the overthrow of the Empire, and, now that this had been done, they aimed at the establishment of a Republic on democratic lines. The Bolsheviks, on the contrary, would have nothing to do with any *bourgeois* group, no matter how advanced it might be. With them it was the masses which alone counted, and it was to the workmen and to the peasants that they turned for the support necessary to enable them to carry out their programme—the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the transformation of the whole social system. Their battle-cry had from the outset been, "All power to the Soviet." Neither the Mensheviks nor the Social Revolutionaries were prepared to rally to this call, but those of their members who took office did, nevertheless, recognize their responsibilities to that assembly and did invariably render an account to it of all their official acts. The moderates of both Socialist groups never, indeed, forgot that, in spite of the differences which separated them from the Bolsheviks, they had been and remained "Comrades," and they were thus in closer touch with them than with their Liberal collaborators. Though they were in agreement with the latter on the question of leaving to the Constituent Assembly the decision on all fundamental questions, they were led by the march of events to anticipate several of its decisions.

As regarded the war, both Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries advocated the speedy conclusion of peace without annexations or contributions. There was, however, a small Menshevik group, led by Plekhanoff, that called on the working classes to co-operate for the purpose of securing the victory over Germany.

which would alone guarantee Russia's new-won freedom. The Bolsheviks, on the other hand, were out and out "Defeatists." The war, as Lenin had contended at the Keinthal Conference in 1916, had to be brought to an end by any means and at any cost. The soldiers had to be induced by an organized propaganda to turn their arms, not against their brothers in the enemy ranks, but against the reactionary *bourgeois* Governments of their own and other countries. For a Bolshevik there was no such thing as country or patriotism, and Russia was but a pawn in Lenin's game. If his dream of a world revolution was ever to be realized, the war being raged by Russia against the Germans had to be converted into a civil war at home —and this was now the end and aim of his policy.

CHAPTER XXVIII

1917

AFTER having been accused by Princess Paley of having made the Embassy a *foyer de propagande révolutionnaire*, it was really hard that I should, shortly after my conversation with the Socialist Ministers, have been attacked by the Bolsheviks on the charge of its being the centre of the counter-revolutionary movement. Tseretelli's name—and this, considering his antecedents, was rather surprising—was also coupled with mine, and we were represented as being the chief promoters of the aforesaid movement. This charge, no doubt, owed its origin to the fact that we were conducting an active Allied propaganda in favour of the war and for the purpose of exposing German misrepresentations. The Germans had for some time past been paying me the most flattering attentions. In April the *Hamburger Nachrichten* had published an article—of which the writer, fortunately for my reputation, had never witnessed my exploits on the links—attributing my success as a diplomatist to my passion for golf. "The conditions," it went on to say, "in which this tiresome game is played do really produce the qualities necessary for any statesmanlike or diplomatic work. Silent, tough, resigned—the good golfer goes round the field, keeping his eye on his ball and steers for his goal. Sir George Buchanan walked

round the golf links of Europe for years, until at last he was able to hole out in Petrograd."

The article in the *Hamburger Nachrichten* furnished Mr. Punch with the subject of some verses on "A School for Statesmen," which, I trust, he will not object to my reproducing here:

Oft have I wondered, as my weapon's edge
Disintegrated solid chunks of greenery,
Or as my pilule flew the bounding hedge
Into outlying sections of the scenery,
What moral value might accrue
From billiards played beneath the blue.

Little I fancied, when I topped the sphere,
And on its candour left a coarse impression,
Or in the bed of some revolting mere
Mislaid three virgin globes in swift succession,
That I was learning how to grip
The rudiments of statesmanship.

Yet so it was. I schooled myself to gaze
Upon the object with a firmly glued eye,
And, though I moved by strange and devious ways,
To keep in view the goal or *finis ludi*,
And ever let my language be
The language of diplomacy.

Thus Balfour learned the politician's game,
And thus Lloyd George was trained to be a premier;
Thence many a leader, who has leapt to fame,
Got self-control, grew harder, tougher, phlegmier,
Reared in the virtues, which prevail
At Walton Heath and Sunningdale.

Golf being thus the source of so much good,
I own my conscience suffers certain wrenches,

Recalling how the Links at Chorley Wood
Have seen me on the Sabbath carving trenches,
Where Tommies might be put to pitch
The deadly bomb from ditch to ditch.

For I reflect that my intruding spade,
That blocked the foursome and debarred the single,
May well have checked some statesman yet unmade,
Some budding Hogge, some mute inglorious Pringle;
And that is why my shovel shrinks
From excavating other links.

O. S.

The Germans now paid me a still greater compliment, as our legation at Stockholm reported that a German agent there was trying to induce a Russian, whose name I have forgotten, to assassinate me; but I was somewhat humiliated on hearing that the price set on my head was only three hundred roubles. The local Bolshevik organ at Riga at the same time published an article stating that Russia was now governed by the all-powerful and autocratic Tsar Buchanan the First—that the Ministers did whatever he told them, and that it was at his orders that Kerensky was re-establishing discipline in the army and preparing an offensive.

It would have been well, both for themselves and Russia, had Ministers heeded my advice and taken effective measures for restoring discipline, instead of relying solely on the effect of patriotic speeches.

On May 24 I received a telegram from Lord Robert Cecil, who was then in charge of the Foreign Office, informing me that the War Cabinet were impressed with the necessity of creating a more favourable attitude among Russian Socialists and workmen

towards the war, and of rectifying the false impressions that were being circulated in Russia about our aims. Feeling that this could be done with better chance of success by a Labour leader than by anyone else, they had decided to send out Mr. Henderson on a special mission. After kindly expressing warm appreciation of my work, Lord Robert went on to say that they felt sure that Mr. Henderson could count on my cordial co-operation, and suggested that, if I saw no objection, it might be well were I, a few weeks after Mr. Henderson's arrival, to come to London to give the Government the benefit of my personal advice.

While I quite appreciated the reasons that had prompted the War Cabinet to send out Mr. Henderson, I failed to understand why they were so anxious that I should come home. "If," as I afterwards wrote to Lord Hardinge, "it was because they were afraid that, were I to remain, Mr. Henderson would not have a free hand to deal with the situation, and that I might not work in line with him, I can only say that such lack of confidence greatly distresses me. When Lord Milner came out to the conference last winter, I was only too ready to efface myself, and it was a real pleasure for me to work under him. I should have been glad to do the same again and to serve under Henderson, who is a Cabinet Minister. His mission will be one of extraordinary difficulty, and, as I understand the Russians better than most people, I might have been able to help him in many ways."

As, however, there was no question of my remaining on, I was determined, at any rate, to have my own

position cleared up. I accordingly sent the following reply to Lord Robert's telegram:

Please assure Mr. Henderson that he can count on my most cordial co-operation and support. As regards question of my going on leave, I am entirely at your orders. I should like to know the approximate date at which you would wish me to start on leave, and whether I am to consider that leave as my definite recall.

On May 29 I received the following reply:

It is difficult to give you even an approximate date for coming on leave until we see how things shape after Henderson's arrival. In any case, I think it very desirable that you should not start until he has got thoroughly into touch with the Russian Government and the Socialist leaders.

There is no question of your being *recalled*. Your services have been and remain most highly valued by His Majesty's Government, and, so far as can be seen at present, we shall most certainly wish to have you back in Petrograd in due course.

What I appreciated much more than the soothing syrup thus dispensed by the Foreign Office were the many proofs of sympathy and attachment given me by the members of my staff. While some took upon themselves to telegraph to their friends at the Foreign Office and the War Office, protesting against the idea of my going, others declared that they would send in their resignations if I went. Henderson arrived on June 2, with George Young, afterwards first secretary at Vienna, who proved most helpful in many ways. In my first conversation with Henderson I expressed my feelings and wishes in the frankest language; but, though quite friendly, he gave me clearly to under-

stand that I should have to go. As regarded the genesis of his mission, he told me that he had one day been asked to come to the War Cabinet half an hour after his colleagues, and that when he got there he had been informed by the Prime Minister that the Cabinet had decided that he was to go to Petrograd on a special mission, and that they wished him to start on the following day. It had subsequently been suggested to him that he should, in a few weeks' time, intimate to me that I had better go home on leave. He had refused to do this, and had told the Foreign Office that they ought to tell me so themselves—and to tell me at once.

Henderson dined with us next night to meet Prince Lvoff and Tereschenko. Among our other guests were Vandervelde, the Belgian Socialist Minister, and Albert Thomas, the French Minister of Munitions, who had taken over charge of the Embassy when Paléologue left. During the two months which he had spent in Russia Thomas had not only tried to bring home to Ministers the need of firmness in dealing with the internal situation, but had endeavoured to rouse with his fiery eloquence the fighting spirit of the people. At Petrograd, at Moscow and at the front he had addressed numberless meetings of soldiers and workmen, and it was not his fault if the seed which he sowed fell on barren soil. We were always delighted to see him, as his whole personality radiated cheerfulness and prevented our feeling depressed. Talking to me after dinner, he asked: "What would you have said had you been told five years ago that I and two other Socialists would one day be guests at your table?" "The very idea of such a thing would," I

replied, "have appalled me." But now *la guerre a changé tout cela*—and we are all "comrades." A fortnight later, when he was dining with us on the night before his return to France, he told me that as soon as he had heard that I was going home he had telegraphed to the Prime Minister, saying that if I went there would, after his own departure, be no one left who understood the situation. He hoped that it would now be all right, as Henderson had, in the course of his last conversation with him, said, "I have decided to leave Buchanan."

I afterwards heard from another source that Henderson had consulted Prince Lvoff as to whether it was better that I should remain in charge of the Embassy or that he should replace me. Lvoff had replied that I had rendered great services under the Empire, and that, though my close relations with the Court had, after the revolution, made me an object of suspicion, I had adapted myself loyally to the new situation. I had, it was true, been attacked by the Bolsheviks, but I enjoyed the confidence of the Government and the Moderates. He would, he added, consult his colleagues. On his doing so, I received a vote of confidence from all, even including the Socialist Ministers. I am glad to have this opportunity of rendering justice to Henderson, who behaved in the most gentlemanly and straightforward manner. He weighed the evidence—pro and con—quite impartially, and finally wrote a very nice letter to the Prime Minister recommending my remaining on. Mr. Lloyd George agreed, and Henderson returned home early in July. During the six weeks that he was at Petrograd we worked together on the most cordial terms. We

held the same views on many questions, and particularly with regard to Ramsay Macdonald's suggested visit to Petrograd, as his visit could not possibly do any harm, while the proceedings of the Russian extremists might, we hoped, serve as an object-lesson to him. In consequence of our representations passports were granted him, but owing to the action of the Seamen's Union he never started. The following little story will serve to show what a good fellow Henderson really was. He was talking to my wife after dining at the Embassy the night before he was leaving when he suddenly burst out laughing, and on my wife asking what had amused him, he said, "It's all so funny! It's you, not I, who ought to be going!" I was really grateful to him for the line which he had taken, for my fate was entirely in his hands. But, after having been officially told that there was no question of my recall, it was rather a shock to me to discover that he had full powers to replace me should he think it desirable. As it turned out, the result of his mission was most satisfactory to me personally.

The internal situation, meanwhile, had undergone but little change. The Government had dealt firmly with an attempt made by the sailors at Cronstadt to set up an independent Republic of their own, and had also scored a certain success by stopping an armed demonstration that had been organized by the Bolsheviks. In a conversation which I had with him on June 27, Prince Lvoff assured me that my fears as to Russia being unable to continue the war were groundless, and that, now that the Government had the requisite forces at their disposal, they were determined

to maintain order. These assurances were discounted by the fact that on the very next day they failed to enforce compliance with the orders which they had given for the evacuation of two villas which had been occupied and held by the Bolsheviks, a failure which, as I told Tereschenko, was tantamount to an abdication of their authority.

The Soviet, on the other hand, had not been idle. They had already, in May, addressed an appeal to the Socialists of all countries to send representatives to an international conference at Stockholm for the purpose of securing a general peace, on principles acceptable to the proletariat, in accordance with the prescribed formula, "without annexations or contributions." In June a new factor was introduced into the situation by the convocation of an all-Russian congress of delegates from the workmen's councils throughout Russia. The idea of its promoters had been to transform the local Petrograd council into a national one, that would be invested with greater authority and influence, while the admission of workmen's and soldiers' deputies from the provinces would, it was thought, act in a moderating sense and establish closer co-operation with the Government. It had also been their intention to include in it representatives of the peasants, but as the latter demanded representation on a proportional basis—namely, about 80 per cent.—the proposal fell through, and the peasants, who had already an independent council of their own, took no part in it. At the opening sitting of the congress Lenin made a violent speech denouncing the war aims of the Allies, which, as Kerensky showed, was taken word for word from the latest German wireless. The only outcome of the

sitting was an invitation to all citizens to take part in an unarmed and peaceful demonstration on July 1 in support of the Government before the burial place of the victims of the revolution on the Champ de Mars. Owing to the Bolsheviks having threatened to come out armed, most of the moderates remained at home, and the few who did participate in it were roughly handled. As the Embassy almost adjoins the Champ de Mars, we were, as usual, the centre of the demonstration; but with the exception of a few free fights, which we watched from our windows, and some muttered Bolshevist threats that our house was the next that they would burn, nothing unpleasant occurred.

On the following day telegrams were received from Kerensky from the front announcing a brilliant commencement of the long-projected offensive. In the evening there were several patriotic demonstrations in front of the Embassy, and at the head of one of them came Miliukoff, who made me a speech from his automobile, to which I replied from the balcony. It was, however, rather a case of "save me from my friends," as the sight of Miliukoff caused a group of soldiers of the Pavlovski Regiment to start a counter-demonstration. Some of them were even heard to say, "Let's go for that house and kill them all"—but nothing came of it. The hopes inspired by Kerensky's optimistic telegrams were not destined to be long-lived. He had done all that a man could do who relied on speeches and on speeches alone to produce a sustained offensive in a war-weary army whose discipline had already been undermined. The main offensive was launched on the south-western front, and was to have been followed by minor offensives on other fronts, and

as the Russians had a superiority both of guns and bayonets, there was no reason why, had it been vigorously pushed, it should not have been successful. It began with an initial success, and on July 8 the army under General Korniloff broke the Austrian front and occupied Halicz and Kaluscz. But while at various points along the line Kerensky had been preaching discipline and a fight to the death, he had allowed Bolshevik agitators at other points to preach peace and fraternization with the Germans. Instead, moreover, of restoring the disciplinary powers of the officers, he had sent commissaries to assist in the maintenance of discipline in the different armies. While some of the regiments fought gallantly, and while the officers sacrificed their lives heroically in what was too often but a vain attempt to induce their men to follow their example, no reliance could be placed on troops that had acquired the habit of debating whether the orders to attack should be obeyed or not. It was hardly surprising, therefore, that when, on July 19, the enemy attacked, one of the regiments engaged beat a precipitate retreat and the front was broken. In the course of a few days the rout became general, and in addition to the places occupied during the offensive, Tarnopol and Stanislau were abandoned.

I must now, once more, draw on my letters to the Foreign Office for an account of the crisis and of what was meanwhile taking place at Petrograd.

July 12.

"Kerensky's work among the troops at the front has throughout been hampered by the anti-war propaganda of the agitators, whom the Bolsheviks are

constantly sending there to dissuade the men from joining in the offensive. The political atmosphere is such that he does not venture to appeal to the troops to fight for victory, but for the speedy conclusion of peace. For peace is the universal desideratum. It is this fact that renders it essential for us to do nothing to give the pacifists here a pretext for contending that the Allies are prolonging the war for imperialistic aims. A refusal of the proposal for a conference, which Tereschenko submitted to Albert Thomas about a month ago, would certainly be interpreted in this sense; and, great as will be the difficulties with which we shall be confronted at such a conference, they will have to be faced sooner or later. To postpone the discussion of our war aims will but discourage Russia from continuing her active participation in the war.

"From what Tereschenko has said to me about the proposed conference, I do not think that he wants to bind us down to any definite peace terms. Those terms would, as he remarked to me one day, depend on the course of the military operations, and it would, therefore, be difficult to define them with precision so long as the war was in progress. On another occasion he spoke of the elaboration of a minimum and maximum peace programme as being worth considering. He is not an idealist, as are most of his Socialist colleagues, and we can, I think, count on his doing his best to induce them to take a practical view of things."

July 23.

"The events of the past week have, once more, proved the truth of the saying that Russia is a country of surprises. Early on Monday morning I received a

telephone message telling me that the four Cadet members of the Government had resigned during the night. Tereschenko and Tseretelli had just returned from Kieff with a draft agreement, which they had negotiated with the Rada for the settlement of the Ukrainian question. The Cadets took exception to it on the ground that the Government would, if they ratified it, be usurping the functions of the Constitutional Assembly. It was not, however, so much considerations of this kind as the fact that they had throughout been in a minority of four that decided them to refuse to assume any further responsibility for measures of which they disapproved.

"Tereschenko, whom I saw in the evening, severely criticized their action. They had, he said, put an end to the existence of the Coalition Government at a moment when Russia was faced with dangers, both from within and from without, while they had not sufficient backing in the country to replace that Government themselves. Tereschenko, nevertheless, spoke with confidence about the internal situation, and when I left him at six o'clock had not the slightest suspicion of the storm that was brewing.

"The first signs which we saw of it were the reappearance of motor lorries and cars filled with armed soldiers and machine guns as we were about to drive to the islands after dinner. We had only got half-way across the bridge when, finding the road blocked, we turned back and took a short drive along the quay and through the town. On our return to the Embassy at a quarter-past nine we found groups of soldiers in excited conversation, and shortly afterwards a long procession crossed the bridge. It was composed

of workmen and of three regiments, all fully armed, with banners bearing the usual inscriptions: 'Down with the Capitalist Ministers,' 'Down with the War,' 'Give us Bread.' Soon afterwards we heard shots at the back of the Embassy, and saw people bolting for safety down the quay.

"As Kerensky was leaving that evening for the front, some of the soldiers drove in motors to the Warsaw station with the intention of arresting him, but arrived there after his train had left. Others went to the Palais Marie to arrest Prince Lvoff and his colleagues, who were holding a Cabinet Council there. On being invited to enter and to talk to the Ministers, they thought better of it, fearing that a trap was being laid for them, and contented themselves with requisitioning the Ministers' motors. On Tuesday things looked very black, as several thousand sailors had arrived from Cronstadt. In the afternoon another monster procession crossed the bridge by the Embassy, and rifle and machine gun firing went on in many parts of the town during the rest of the day. About luncheon time Tereschenko telephoned to say that as soon as troops arrived from the front the disorders would be put down with a firm hand, and that as most of the fighting would probably take place near the Embassy, he would feel happier if we were to go away for a few days. This, however, I declined to do.

"The position of the Government on that afternoon was a very critical one, and had not the Cossacks and a few loyal regiments come out in time to save them they would have had to capitulate. While we were at dinner the Cossacks charged the Cronstadt sailors, who had gathered in the square adjoining the

Embassy, and sent them flying for their lives. The Cossacks then rode back along the quay, but a little higher up they got caught in a cross-fire. We saw several riderless horses returning at full gallop, and two Cossacks who were bringing back a prisoner were attacked by some soldiers and all but murdered under our windows. On Tuesday night an order was issued forbidding anyone to go out in the streets after noon on the following day, and all the bridges were either opened or strongly guarded so as to prevent the Bolsheviks crossing over from the other side. A guard, consisting of an officer and ten men, had been placed in the Embassy, and General Knox and Colonel Thornhill also slept in the house.

"Wednesday was a more or less quiet day, but at six o'clock on Thursday morning we were woke up by our officer, who begged us to retire to the back of the house. The Government troops, he told us, had been ordered to seize the fortress, which had been occupied by the insurgents, as well as Lenin's headquarters on the other side of the river; and, were the guns of the fortress to be turned on the troops stationed on this side, we should be in the line of fire. A little later Tereschenko telephoned, placing an apartment in the Ministry at our disposal; but I did not like to leave the Embassy, while my wife and daughter would not leave me. We spent an exciting morning watching the movements of the troops. A strong guard of soldiers and sailors, with several armoured cars, were stationed by the bridge, while artillery was held in reserve behind the Embassy. An alarm was occasionally sounded, and then a few troops would dash half-way across the

bridge, kneeling down and taking such cover as they could find. By one o'clock both the fortress and the villa where Lenin had established his headquarters had surrendered, and, though on Friday night there was again a good deal of firing with machine guns from some river barges, we have had since then a comparatively quiet time.

"In the course of conversations which I had with him on Thursday and Friday, Tereschenko told me that Kerensky had telegraphed from the front, saying that he could not continue to work with colleagues, who were constantly temporizing with the extremists instead of putting them down. I said that I quite sympathized with him. The Government had been too weak. The loyal troops, after occupying the offices of the Bolshevist organ, the *Pravda*, and seizing compromising documents, had been ordered to evacuate the premises and to restore the documents; the Cronstadt sailors had been disarmed, but had not been punished; and two of Lenin's lieutenants who had been arrested had been released. I did not know which of the Ministers were opposed to the adoption of stern measures against the promoters of the disorders which had resulted in five hundred casualties, but I was afraid that the Prime Minister was not strong enough to take advantage of this unique opportunity of suppressing anarchy once for all. Tereschenko replied that the opposition had come from the Soviet, but that their eyes had now been opened to the gravity of the situation. There had, he added, been a moment during the recent disorders when many of them might have lost their lives at the hands of the insurgents had not the Government sent troops for their protection."

CHAPTER XXIX

1917

OWING to the loss of heavy artillery, guns and military supplies, the situation at the front was becoming desperate, while the economic and financial position was almost as serious. But, black as was the outlook, I was nevertheless inclined to take a more hopeful view of things. The Government had suppressed the Bolshevik rising and seemed at last determined to act with firmness. So long as anarchy reigned supreme there could be no real or lasting improvement, but the restoration of order would, I trusted, react favourably on all branches of the national life. Kerensky had returned from the front on the evening of July 19, and had at once demanded, as a condition of his retaining office, that the Government should have complete executive control over the army without any interference on the part of soldiers' committees, that an end should be put to all Bolshevik agitation, and that Lenin and his associates should be arrested. The public and the majority of the troops were on the side of the Government, as their indignation had been aroused by the publication of documents proving that the Bolshevik leaders were in German pay. The psychological moment had come for the Government to deal a final and crushing blow at the enemy within the gates. But the Soviet raised

objections. They had no wish to see the charges brought against the Bolsheviks investigated for fear that some of their own members might be compromised, and they declined to invest the Government with the powers demanded by Kerensky unless it took its stand on a thoroughly democratic platform. The conditions on which they insisted were the immediate proclamation of a Republic and the adoption of Chernoff's scheme for the settlement of the land question, without awaiting the decision of the Constituent Assembly. These conditions gave rise to a stormy discussion in the Cabinet, the Socialist Ministers siding with the Soviet, while Prince Lvoff threatened to resign, declaring that, were the Government to accept them, they would be acting beyond their powers and usurping those of the Constituent Assembly. Tereschenko vainly tried to play the part of mediator and to evolve some compromise that would reconcile these conflicting views. While the discussion was still proceeding Kerensky was called away to fulfil an engagement to address a hussar regiment. On his return he was handed a telegram which brought the first news of the Germans having broken through the Russian front. On his reading it to his colleagues, Prince Lvoff expressed the wish to resign the premiership in Kerensky's favour, as being a younger and more active man and in closer touch with the democracy. This was agreed to, and Kerensky was at the same time accorded all the powers which he had asked for. As he was to retain the post of Minister of War, it was further decided that Nekrassoff should be appointed Vice-President of the Council, and that he should replace Kerensky during the latter's absence at the

front. Nekrassoff, who belonged to the left wing of the Cadet party, was a strong and capable man, who was credited with the ambition of becoming Prime Minister. He did not, however, inspire confidence, as he was too much of an opportunist and had changed parties more than once in order to advance his own interests.

On my calling on him a few days later, Tereschenko assured me that the Government was now completely master of the situation and would act independently of the Soviet. Taking me to the window, he showed me the disarmed men of the machine gun regiment drawn up in the Winter Palace square, and said that they were about to be entrained for work on the Murman railway. The committee of the All Russian Workmen's and of the All Russian Peasants' Councils had, he further told me, given the Government full powers to deal with the army, as well as with the Anarchists in the rear, and Kerensky had already, in compliance with Korniloff's request, empowered the army commanders to shoot without trial all men who disobeyed orders. But, though he now possessed all the powers necessary for dealing with the situation, Kerensky completely failed to turn them to proper account. He made no attempt to find and arrest Lenin; he countermanded the order for the arrest of Trotzky and another leading Bolshevik on account of their being members of the executive committee of the Soviet, and he contented himself with issuing proclamations ordering the workmen to deliver up their arms, instead of allowing the military authorities to disarm them by force. In fact, I doubt very much if any of the organizers of the Bolshevik rising or any of the men who took part in

it were ever really punished. I was anything but satisfied with the attitude of the Government, and in my conversation with Tereschenko I endeavoured to impress on him the necessity of applying the same disciplinary measures in the rear as had been sanctioned at the front, and of reorganizing the defective transport system that was at the root of most of Russia's economic troubles. I further suggested that the troops at the front should be reduced to the minimum necessary for holding the Germans, and that the rest should be brought back to work in the rear under a system of national obligatory service.

Kerensky, meanwhile, was endeavouring to reconstruct his Government with a view to giving it a more national character. The Cadets, with whom he had entered into negotiations, attached as conditions to their participation the resignation of Tchernoff, the active prosecution of the war, and the independence of the Government from the Soviet—with all of which, as I told Tereschenko, I heartily sympathized. The first condition proved unacceptable, as Kerensky was afraid that Tchernoff's enforced resignation would lose him the support of the Social Revolutionaries.

I will now once more quote from my correspondence with the Foreign Office and from a diary which I had begun to keep after the revolution.

August 2.

"Tereschenko told me this morning that both he and Kerensky had tendered their resignations, but had withdrawn them at the request of their colleagues. Tchernoff had also resigned and had, on going to the Soviet, received a great ovation. Tereschenko then

proceeded to say that if the Government did not now apply stringent measures they would have to give up their places to men of the counter-revolution. His country had the first place in his eyes, and the situation brooked no delay. He had told Kerensky that unless the latter acted with vigour he would resign. It was necessary, in his opinion, to militarize the whole country, to repress all disorders, and to admit Korniloff into the Government. Kerensky shared these views, but his hands were tied, while the Socialist Ministers did not wish to assume responsibility for the measures necessary to save the country. Tseretelli, he said, would prefer to leave the Government and to act as an independent member of the Soviet, while the Cadets wanted a complete party triumph and to replace the Government.

"The situation is so obscure that I personally see no daylight. The carrying out of Tereschenko's policy can only be undertaken by a Government in which the Socialists are strongly represented, otherwise it will be accused of paving the way for a counter-revolution, with the result that there will be another Bolshevik rising and a lapse into anarchy. The Cadets have not got the army with them, and it is premature for them to assume office with any prospect of success."

August 2.

"I have reason to believe that the non-Socialist members of the Government would much prefer that the Stockholm conference should not take place for fear that peace talk might have a bad influence on the army. They will not, however, place any obstacles in the way of the attendance of Russian Socialists, but they will

not consider themselves bound by the decisions which the conference may take. They are anxious that it should be attended by Socialists of other allied countries so that Russia should not be left *tête-à-tête* with Germany.

"My personal opinion is that it would be a mistake to leave the Germans a clear field at Stockholm, more especially as it would render our attitude open to misconstruction here. As we have no intention of being bound by the conference's decisions, I do not see how the attendance of British Socialists can prejudice our interests."

August 4.

"I would venture to submit that the time has come for us, in reply to Russia's appeal for our co-operation, to tell her Government frankly that, while we will continue to do all that is possible to relieve the pressure on her front by pushing our offensive, we expect her in return to concentrate all her energies on the reorganization of her armies and to re-establish discipline both at the front and in the rear. It would be well were the Allied Ambassadors to be instructed to speak in the above sense to the president of the council as soon as the new Government is formed."

As a result of the above telegram the representatives of the Allied Governments, assembled in conference in London, sent Kerensky, through their Ambassadors at Petrograd, a message which, though intended as a protest, did but express a pious wish for the re-establishment of discipline in the army. I was, however, authorized, if I thought it advisable, to speak to him

privately, in the name of His Majesty's Government, on the lines which I had suggested.

August 6.

"Kerensky has formed a Government composed of six Socialist and eight non-Socialist members. Five of the latter belong to the Cadet party. Aksentieff, the president of the Council of Peasants, becomes Minister of the Interior, and Savenkoff, the former Terrorist, vice-Minister of War. Korniloff is appointed Commander-in-Chief.

August 11.

"I met Kerensky to-day at a luncheon given by Tereschenko. In the course of our conversation I said that I was much depressed by the fact that everybody seemed to regard the situation entirely from the party point of view, and that political considerations had precedence over military exigencies. Referring next to a request which Korniloff had addressed to us for more guns, I remarked that we had seen the initial success of the July offensive converted into a rout owing to lack of discipline, and that our military authorities were hardly likely to accede to the above request unless assured that Korniloff would be given full powers to restore discipline. It would, I added, help to reassure my Government could I inform them that Petrograd had been included in the front zone and placed under martial law. Kerensky, after declaring that the Government were determined to maintain order, said, somewhat huffily, that if we were going to haggle about guns and would not help Russia, we had better say so at once. I told him that he had misunderstood

me, that we had had every desire to help Russia, but that it was no good our sending guns to her front if they were to be captured by the Germans. We had need of every gun we could get on our own front, and by using them there we were rendering her effective assistance."

A week later I received a reply to the above telegram instructing me to assure Kerensky of the earnest desire of His Majesty's Government to assist Russia, and to tell him that, though the British army was engaged in the heaviest offensive it had yet undertaken, they had given orders to resume the despatch of heavy guns to Russia.

August 13.

"The publication of the correspondence between the Prime Minister and Mr. Henderson respecting the latter's attitude towards the Stockholm conference has caused the Russian Government much embarrassment and exposed it to attacks on the part of the Soviet. In speaking to me on the subject, Tereschenko said that he had instructed the Russian *chargé d'affaires* to inform His Majesty's Government that the Russian Government regarded the Stockholm conference as a party conference, whose decisions would not in any way bind them, but that Nabokoff's covering note to Mr. Balfour, on which the Prime Minister had laid stress, had been written without his instructions. He had never intended him to say that the Russian Government were opposed to the conference. (Mr. Nabokoff had in his note to Mr. Balfour used words that had been interpreted in this sense.)

"While both Tereschenko and Kerensky have admitted to me that they would prefer that the conference should not take place, they never intended that we should state publicly that they were opposed to it. Kerensky begged me this morning to urge His Majesty's Government not to refuse passports to our Socialists."

August 15.

"I have kept you fully informed by telegraph of the various stages of the recent ministerial crisis and of the final reconstruction of the Government. It is an improvement on the old one, and some of the new Ministers are good men. Plekhanoff, who has done excellent work, was to have entered the Government, but the Soviet would not allow it, as they have never forgiven him for saying that he was a patriot before he was a Socialist.

"We have come to a curious pass in this country when one welcomes the appointment of a terrorist, who was one of the chief organizers of the murders of the Grand Duke Serge and Plehve, in the hope that his energy and strength of character may yet save the army. Savenkoff is an ardent advocate of stringent measures, both for the restoration of discipline and for the repression of anarchy, and he is credited with having asked Kerensky's permission to go with a couple of regiments to the Tauride Palace to arrest the Soviet. Needless to say that this permission was not given. On the other hand, he is unfortunately against re-investing the officers with their former disciplinary powers, and prefers to confer those powers on the Government's commissaries at

the front as a safeguard against a possible counter-revolution.

"Though the news from the army is better and though everything is quiet at Petrograd, I cannot look upon the situation as satisfactory. The Government lost a unique opportunity of putting down the Bolsheviks once and for all after the disturbances of last month. On my reproaching Tereschenko with this, he said that Kerensky was unfortunately at the front when those disturbances broke out. He had, on his return, remarked that it would have been better had Prince Lvoff delayed for a couple of hours the despatch of troops and guns to protect the members of the Soviet, who on the Monday evening were in danger of being arrested or murdered by the insurgent troops. The Government as a whole does not inspire much confidence. Guchkoff takes the gloomiest view of the situation and declares that not only will the army soon be confronted with famine, but that, if the war has to be continued through the winter, it will dissolve and melt away. He told me the other day that the present Government was hopeless and could never save the country. He would, of course, like to get rid of the Socialists and replace them with men from the parties of the right. I replied that no Government could do anything unless it could count on the support of the Petrograd garrison, which as at present disposed was more likely to obey the orders of the Soviet than those of the Government.

"I had a long conversation with Prince Kropotkin the other day. He takes a very similar view to what I do of the situation, though he is rather more pessimistic than I am about the future. I still hope that

Russia will pull through, though the obstacles in her path—whether they be of a military, industrial or financial character—are appalling. How she is going to find the money to continue the war and to pay the interest on her national debt beats me altogether, and we and the Americans will soon have to face the fact that we shall have to finance her to a very considerable extent if we want to see her carry on through the winter. We cannot, however, be expected to do this till we have proof of her determination to put her house in order by restoring strict discipline in the army and repressing anarchy in the rear. General Korniloff is the only man strong enough to do this, and he has given the Government clearly to understand that unless they comply with his demands and give him the powers which he considers necessary he will resign his command. The danger is that, if he succeeds and acquires a predominant influence with the army, he may become an object of suspicion to the Soviet, whose policy of undermining discipline was originally dictated by the fear of seeing the army become the dominant factor in the country."

August 24.

"I returned last night from a week's holiday in Finland and saw Tereschenko this morning. I told him that I was greatly disappointed to find that the situation had, if anything, changed for the worse, that hardly any of the disciplinary measures contemplated had been applied, and that the Government seemed to me weaker than ever. On my inquiring whether Kerensky was in agreement with the commander-in-chief on the question of the death penalty in the rear,

he said that it was only during the past few weeks that it had been possible even to moot this question and that the Government had been obliged to move very cautiously. Kerensky, he told me, had, in the Council of Ministers advocated its application to certain offences committed against the State by soldiers and civilians alike, but the Cadets had objected to its being applied to the latter for fear that it might be used against persons suspected of promoting a counter-revolution. I replied that, whatever reasons the Government may have had for caution in the past, they had now no time to lose, as, apart from the military outlook, the economic situation was so serious that unless drastic measures were at once taken there would be serious trouble in the winter. I had once warned the Emperor that hunger and cold would bring revolution in their train, and if the Government did not act with promptitude the same causes would provoke a counter-revolution. Tereschenko admitted that the Government was not as strong as he could wish, but said that General Korniloff would, at the Moscow conference, which opens to-morrow, submit his programme and explain the measures which he considers it necessary to take. The conference will constitute the first great national gathering since the revolution, and will be attended by all the Ministers as well as by representatives of the Soviet and of other institutions."

August 29.

"Though, with the exception of the extremists, all parties were agreed not to cause the Government embarrassments, the conference, so far from securing national unity, has rather accentuated the differences

existing between the different parties, and we shall probably be faced with another crisis before many weeks are passed."

August 30.

"Tereschenko, with whom I had a conversation on his return from Moscow, considers that the conference has strengthened the hands of the Government. The commander-in-chief, he said, had now full powers to deal with the army at the front, but had not asked for the immediate application of the death penalty everywhere in the rear. Martial law had been proclaimed at Kazan, but it would be risky to proclaim it at Petrograd. Other measures would, however, be taken to deal with the situation here, which he admitted was very unsatisfactory."

August 31.

"I saw Kerensky this morning and, on my questioning him about the conference, he expressed himself as satisfied with its results. I told him that, though I was one of the few who had not abandoned all hope of Russia being able to pull herself together, I could not assume the responsibility of sending favourable reports to my Government unless he could give me satisfactory assurances as regarded the maintenance of order in the rear as well as on the food and transport questions. Korniloff had spoken at Moscow of the danger of a breakdown of the railways and of the army being faced with famine, and were this to happen there would be a general collapse, for which I must prepare my Government.

"Kerensky could not deny that the situation was very serious. He could, he said, make no prophecies or give any absolute guarantees as regarded the future. At Moscow the representatives of the Soviet and of the industrial organizations had promised the Government their support. Tseretelli had declared that the war must be continued until the enemy had been expelled from Russian territory, and that it was only over the body of the revolution that a separate peace would ever be made. He could but reaffirm this declaration and assure me that Russia would never withdraw from the war unless she was materially incapable of continuing it. The death penalty, he added, would be applied in the rear in the case of all persons guilty of high treason. I told him that what preoccupied me most was the fact that the Socialist members of the Government were afraid of making the army a really efficient fighting force lest it might one day be used against the revolution. This was a fatal mistake, and if there ever was a counter-revolution it would be due to the failure of the Government to take the necessary measures to save the country. If the Government did their duty they had nothing to fear. Kerensky said that I was mistaken, that the danger already existed, and that he could never lend a hand to forge a weapon that might be delivered over to those who would use it against the revolution. On his appealing to me to give the Provisional Government my active support and to discourage all talk of reaction, I said that I had in two interviews, which I had recently given the Press, called on all parties and on all classes to sink their differences and to rally round the Government in defence of their country. I could

not, however, conceal from him how painful it was to me to watch what was going on in Petrograd. While British soldiers were shedding their blood for Russia, Russian soldiers were loafing in the streets, fishing in the river and riding on the trams, and German agents were everywhere. He could not deny this, but said that measures would be taken promptly to remedy these abuses."

September 3.

"The fears expressed by Kerensky of a counter-revolution are to a certain extent justified, as I have since been told that a group of persons, who are said to have the support of prominent financiers and industrials as well as of certain regiments, contemplate arresting the Government and dissolving the Soviet. Though discontent is growing in consequence of the fall of Riga and the serious situation at Dvinsk, such an attempt has no chance of success."

September 3.

"Since I last wrote public interest has centred round the Moscow conference and the influence it is likely to exercise on the political situation. The only concrete results, so far as I can judge, are that, after the very outspoken language of Ministers, the nation knows the truth about the desperate state of the country, while the Government has learnt the views of the various parties and industrial organizations. So far from contributing to establish national unity, the conference has but served to accentuate party differences, and though all the speeches, with the

exception of those pronounced by the Bolsheviks, were surcharged with patriotic sentiments, no attempt was made to bridge the gulf that separates the right and the left. Kerensky indulged in generalities. He neither told his audience what he had done in the past nor what he proposed doing in the future. Neither he nor any of the party leaders, with the exception of Cheidze, the president of the Soviet, submitted any concrete proposals.

"While expressing their readiness to support the Government, they did so conditionally and under reserve, and showed not the slightest disposition to sink their differences or to sacrifice their class interests. The curious thing is that they all seem to think that they scored a success at the conference, but nobody is agreed as to what the conference actually accomplished. On the whole, however, the Government as a body has strengthened its position, as, though no resolution was passed, it has now virtually full powers to deal with the situation if it will only use them.

"Kerensky, on the other hand, has personally lost ground, and he made a distinctly bad impression by the way in which he presided over the conference and by the autocratic tone of his speeches. According to all accounts, he was very nervous; but whether this was due to overstrain or to the rivalry which undoubtedly exists between him and Korniloff it is difficult to say. Korniloff is a much stronger man than Kerensky, and were he to assert his influence over the army and were the latter to become a strong fighting force he would be master of the situation. I hear from several sources that Kerensky did his best to prevent

Korniloff addressing the conference, and though he has been obliged by the force of circumstances to accede to all the General's demands, he evidently regards him as a dangerous rival. Rodzianko and his friends on the right went out of their way to compromise Korniloff by putting him forward as their champion, while the Socialists, in consequence, adopted a hostile attitude and acclaimed Kerensky.

"Korniloff's conduct, moreover, was hardly calculated to lull the suspicions with which he was regarded by Kerensky. He made a dramatic entry into Moscow, surrounded by his Turcoman guard, and before proceeding to the conference visited the sacred shrine, where the Emperor always went to pray whenever he came to Moscow. Kerensky, whose head has been somewhat turned of late and who has been nicknamed 'the little Napoleon,' did his best to act up to this new rôle by posing in several of Napoleon's favourite attitudes and by making his two *aides-de-camp* stand behind him during the whole of the proceedings. There is little love, I imagine, lost between the two men, but our chief safeguard lies in the fact that, for the moment at any rate, neither can get on without the other. Kerensky cannot hope to retrieve the military situation without Korniloff, who is the only man capable of controlling the army; while Korniloff cannot dispense with Kerensky, who, in spite of his waning popularity, is the man best fitted to appeal to the masses and to secure their acceptance of the drastic measures which must be taken in the rear if the army is to face a fourth winter campaign.

"Rodzianko and others have been talking far too

much about a counter-revolution and have been saying that a military *coup d'état* is the only thing that can save Russia. The Cadets, too, though they have been more prudent in their language, are determined to try to overthrow the Government, and have by their tactics inspired the belief that they also are working for a counter-revolution. In a telegram which General Barter sent me on his return to headquarters from Moscow, he spoke as if some sort of *coup d'état* might be attempted at any moment. I have told him that anything of the kind would be fatal at present, and would inevitably lead to civil war and entail irreparable disaster. I do not regard Kerensky as an ideal Prime Minister, and, in spite of the services which he has rendered in the past, he has almost played his part. But I do not see who is to replace him with advantage, nor do I believe that a purely Cadet and Octobrist Government would do any better than the present one, though certain changes ought certainly to be made in its composition and Tchernoff ought more especially to be dismissed.

"The long conversation which I had with Kerensky a few days ago rather depressed me, as he could not deny that there might be an eventual collapse owing to the breakdown of the railways and the scarcity of supplies, while the fear of the army being one day used to carry out a counter-revolution makes him hesitate to go all lengths to restore its discipline and efficiency. He more than once spoke of the necessity of our all doing our utmost to shorten the duration of the war, as if he feared that Russia could not hold out indefinitely. I told him that it was with this object that all the Allies were pushing their offensives on the various

fronts and that, if he wished the war shortened, he must help us by restoring the combative power of the Russian army by restoring order in the interior and by applying to the troops in the rear the disciplinary measures in force at the front. He gave me positive assurances on all these points, but whether he will give effect to them I will not venture to predict."

CHAPTER XXX

1917

THE Moscow conference had hardly separated when the rumours of a projected *coup d'état* began to take a more material shape. Journalists and others who were in touch with its promoters even told me that its success was assured, and that the Government and Soviet would capitulate without a struggle. On Wednesday, September 5, a Russian friend of mine, who was the director of one of the principal Petrograd banks, came to see me and said that he found himself in rather an embarrassing position, as he had been charged by certain persons, whose names he mentioned, with a message which he felt that it was hardly proper for him to deliver. These persons, he then proceeded to say, wished me to know that their organization was backed by several important financiers and industrials, that it could count on the support of Korniloff and an army corps, that it would begin operations on the following Saturday, September 8, and that the Government would then be arrested and the Soviet dissolved. They hoped that I would assist them by placing the British armoured cars at their disposal and by helping them to escape should their enterprise fail.

I replied that it was a very naïve proceeding on the part of those gentlemen to ask an Ambassador to conspire against the Government to which he was

accredited and that if I did my duty I ought to denounce their plot. Though I would not betray their confidence, I would not give them either my countenance or support. I would, on the contrary, urge them to renounce an enterprise that was not only foredoomed to failure, but that would at once be exploited by the Bolsheviks. If General Korniloff were wise he would wait for the Bolsheviks to make the first move and then come and put them down.

The fall of Riga and the retreat of the Russian army had created a panic in the town, and everybody who could was preparing to leave. Steps had already been taken to remove the State archives to Moscow, and the Government were seriously considering the question of transferring their headquarters there. In a conversation, which I had with him on the 6th, Tereschenko informed me that three cavalry divisions had been summoned from the front to guard against the danger of a Bolshevik rising, and I rather hoped from what he told me about the political situation that Kerensky and Korniloff were, after all, working together for the maintenance of order. I had spent Sunday, the 9th, at Mourina, a village some fifteen miles from Petrograd, where the British colony had laid out a rough golf course, and on returning in the evening I found a telephone message from Tereschenko asking me to come to the Ministry with the French Ambassador, M. Noulens, immediately after dinner. He then told us of the complete breach which had just taken place between Kerensky and Korniloff.

So many different accounts have been published of the genesis of their quarrel that it is still difficult to apportion the share of blame attaching to each or even

to state correctly what actually happened. The person, whether wittingly or not, responsible for bringing matters to a head was the former Procurator of the Holy Synod, Vladimir Lvoff. He had a conversation with Kerensky on the 4th, and immediately afterwards proceeded to headquarters, apparently with the object of arranging for the formation of a stronger Government. According to a statement subsequently published by Savinkoff, he gave Korniloff the choice between three possible courses, and he did so in such a way that Korniloff was under the impression that he was speaking in Kerensky's name :—

1. Korniloff to form a Government, with Kerensky and Savinkoff respectively Ministers of Justice and War.

2. A triumvirate, with dictatorial powers, composed of Kerensky, Korniloff and Savinkoff.

3. Korniloff to declare himself dictator.

On returning to Petrograd on Saturday, the 8th, Lvoff told Kerensky that Korniloff had decided to declare himself dictator, and that he wished Kerensky and Savinkoff to come to the Stavka on the following Monday and to act under him as Ministers of Justice and of War. After asking Lvoff to give him this message in writing, Kerensky had a conversation with Korniloff by direct wire in which he asked him whether he confirmed the message which Lvoff had brought. He received a reply in the affirmative. Tereschenko afterwards told me that the above account was more or less correct, but that Kerensky had made the great mistake of promising Korniloff in the course of their conversation to come to the Stavka in a couple of days. It was only after consulting Nekrassoff that Kerensky, in

accordance with the latter's advice, decided to denounce Korniloff as a traitor and to demand his resignation. According to Savinkoff, Lvoff had, whether intentionally or not, misrepresented Korniloff's attitude by giving to his message the form of an ultimatum instead of presenting it as the expression of his views. Nekrassoff, on the other hand, declared that Lvoff had saved the revolution by discovering and disclosing the plot before it could be put into execution. Tereschenko, unfortunately, at the critical moment was half-way between Petrograd and the Stavka, when he received a telegram from Kerensky telling him to return at once. Had he been at Petrograd he would have prevented Kerensky pushing matters to a complete rupture, while had he been at the Stavka he would have exercised a restraining influence on Korniloff.

In a conversation which I had with him in London in 1918, Kerensky, in reply to a question of mine as to his relations with Korniloff, said that he had always looked on him as a patriot and an honest man, but as a very bad politician. He had acceded to all Korniloff's demands with regard to the death penalty and to the extension of the front as far as Petrograd, but he could not allow the seat of Government to be placed under his orders, as in that case the Ministers would all have been at his mercy. He had also sent Savinkoff to the Stavka to try to effect a working arrangement with him. He was aware that a counter-revolutionary plot, having for its object the overthrow of the Government, was being organized by Zavoiko, Aladin and others in his entourage, and some ten days before the final rupture he had warned Korniloff that he must not be in too great a hurry, but must give the Government

time to promulgate gradually the disciplinary measures on which he was insisting. He had even asked him if he contemplated establishing a military dictatorship, and Korniloff had replied: "Yes, if God wills." He (Kerensky) had expressly stipulated that the Caucasian Division, known by the name of the "Division Sauvage," was not to be included among the troops to be sent to Petrograd and that those troops were not to be placed under the orders of General Krimoff; but in spite of this Korniloff had placed Krimoff in command and was sending the "Division Sauvage" with him. Though he had had a conversation with Lvoff before the latter started for the Stavka, he had not charged him with any mission; and in the telegraphic conversation, which he had had with Korniloff after Lvoff's return, he had put the question quite clearly to the former, in terms which could not be misunderstood, and had received an affirmative answer. As he knew that Krimoff's troops had already reached Luga and that a rising was being organized at Petrograd that was to take effect as soon as he left for the Stavka, he had no alternative but to declare Korniloff a traitor.

In two orders of the day to the army, published September 10 and 11, Korniloff gave his version of the story, which puts his conduct in a very different light.

On September 7 the former Procurator of the Holy Synod, M. Vladimir Lvoff, came to the Stavka and, speaking on behalf and in the name of M. Kerensky, asked me to state my views regarding three different ways of organizing a new Government, suggested by M. Kerensky himself: 1—The withdrawal of Kerensky from all part in the Government; 2—the participation of Kerensky in the Government; and 3—a proposal to me to assume the dictatorship, which was to be proclaimed by the existing Provisional Government.

I replied that the only solution lay in the establishment of a dictatorship and the proclamation of martial law throughout the country.

Under the dictatorship I understood not a one-man dictatorship, inasmuch as I had pointed out the necessity of Kerensky and Savinkoff participating in the Government.

I have always held and still consider any return to the old régime to be an utter impossibility; and the task of the new Government should be exclusively devoted to saving the country and the civic liberties won by the revolution.

On the evening of September 8 I exchanged telegrams with Kerensky, who asked me if I would confirm what I said to Lvoff.

As I could not believe that the emissary, sent to me by the Provisional Government, could distort the sense of my conversation with him, I replied that I did confirm my words fully, and I again invited Kerensky and Savinkoff to come to the Stavka, as I could not answer for their safety if they remained in Petrograd.

In reply, the Minister President stated that he would start on the 9th.

From the foregoing it is clear that, up to the evening of the 8th, my actions and decisions were proceeding in full accord with the Provisional Government.

On the morning of the 9th I received a telegram from the Minister President, intimating that I must immediately hand over the office of supreme commander-in-chief to my chief of the staff and leave at once for Petrograd.

The chief of the staff declined to take over the post, and I considered it impossible to hand it over till the situation had been fully cleared up. . . .

There could not be the slightest doubt in my mind that irresponsible influences had got the upper hand in Petrograd, and that our country was being led to the edge of the grave.

At such moments one cannot discuss, one must act. And I took the decision, which you know of, to save my country, or to die at my post.

On receiving Kerensky's telegram calling on him to resign Korniloff had to choose between absolute submission or open revolt, and he opted for the latter in the honest conviction that a continuance of the Government's undecided policy would spell disaster for Russia. The following extract from my diary and from my telegraphic reports to the Foreign Office will show how grave was the situation during the critical days which followed.

September 10.

"On my calling on Tereschenko this morning I found him much preoccupied by the turn which events have taken. General Alexeieff, he told me, had arrived at midnight and had urged the adoption of a policy of conciliation. The Government were considering the question when they received the news that Korniloff had proclaimed himself dictator and that he had, in the manifesto which he had issued, accused them of having provoked the crisis by sending Lvoff to the Stavka as an *agent provocateur*. He had further instructed General Krimoff to advance on Petrograd with a cavalry corps and artillery, which were at Luga at a couple of days' march from the capital. This meant the beginning of civil war, and it was, therefore, impossible for the Government to have any further dealings with him. The advance on Petrograd would be resisted by force, but he was afraid that the consequent cutting off of supplies would provoke a Bolshevik rising that would end in a Commune. He would therefore advise the diplomatic body to leave at once for Moscow or Finland, and on hearing from me he would make the necessary arrangements for their doing so.

I told him that I could not possibly run away and leave the British colony unprotected, and that there was not sufficient time to arrange for the evacuation of all the Allied colonies. I would call a meeting of the heads of missions and let him know their wishes, but I would, at the same time, urge on the Government the necessity of a reconciliation with the commander-in-chief and of sending General Alexeieff as an intermediary to arrange terms with him. As he held out no hope of any such step being taken, there is nothing to be done but to await events and to trust that Korniloff will be strong enough to overcome all resistance in the course of a few days.

"On returning home I endeavoured to persuade my wife and daughter to go to Finland, but, with characteristic courage, they absolutely refused to leave me. At the meeting of the heads of missions, held at the Embassy in the afternoon, it was decided that we should remain at Petrograd in order to ensure protection for our nationals; while the Allied representatives subsequently passed a resolution tendering their good offices, as mediators, in the conflict that had arisen between the Provisional Government and the commander-in-chief, with the sole object of averting civil war and of serving the interests of Russia and her allies."

September 10.

"In handing to Tereschenko this evening the resolution passed by the Allied representatives, I told him that, while we had no wish to intervene in Russian internal affairs, we desired, as Russia's friends and allies, to place our services at the Government's

disposal could we in any way help to avert what might prove an irreparable disaster.

"After expressing his thanks and saying that he would at once inform the Prime Minister of the action we had taken, he told me that, in his opinion, a conflict was now inevitable. The social revolutionaries, together with Kerensky, held that there was nothing to do but to fight it out, as matters had gone too far to admit of any compromise. The Cadets, on the other hand, were in favour of the Government giving in and of allowing Korniloff to form a Ministry. Tereschenko had himself always been a warm admirer of the commander-in-chief and would be prepared to go very far to save the country from civil war. He could not, however, regard without serious apprehension the idea of entrusting Russia's destinies to the group of men by whom Korniloff was surrounded. His chief adviser, Zavoiko, was designated for the post of Minister of Finance, but his past record was such that no confidence could be placed in him; while his future colleagues, including Aladin, who was to be Minister for Foreign Affairs, were not much better. Tereschenko added that he was personally still working for a reconciliation, and was urging that both Kerensky and Korniloff should retire, and that a new Government should be formed of representatives of the Moderate parties to the exclusion of the Soviet."

September 11.

"Minister for Foreign Affairs informed me this morning that the Prime Minister had charged him to thank the Allied Ambassadors for their action, which had greatly touched him, and to express regret that the

commander-in-chief's attitude made it impossible for the Government to try to make terms with him.

"Tereschenko tells me that the Petrograd garrison has declared for the Government, and that the only troops on whom Korniloff can rely are the three cavalry divisions under Krimoff. All the Ministers have resigned, though continuing to act as heads of their respective departments, and Kerensky is virtually dictator."

September 12.

"In consequence of the slowness of Korniloff's advance the Government has had time to organize the garrison, to bring up soldiers and sailors from Cronstadt, to arm thousands of workmen, and to arrest many of his supporters."

September 12.

"Tereschenko tells me that Korniloff has definitely resigned, that Kerensky will assume the supreme command of the army, with General Alexeieff as chief of the general staff, and that General Verkhovski, the commander-in-chief of the Moscow district, will become Minister of War."

Korniloff's venture had from the outset been marked by the almost childish incapacity of its organizers, and ended in a complete fiasco. On arriving at a station some seventeen miles distant from Petrograd his troops were met by Tchernoff and, as they had been kept in ignorance of the object of their expedition, were persuaded by him to declare for Kerensky. Krimoff, their commander, was brought to Petrograd in a motor, and after an interview with Kerensky shot himself. Korni-

loff was placed under arrest while awaiting his trial for high treason, but succeeded in escaping after the Bolshevik revolution.

Although all my sympathies were with Korniloff, I had always done my best to discourage the idea of a military *coup d'état*, as Russia's best hope of salvation lay in a close co-operation between him and Kerensky. Korniloff, who was not a reactionary, honestly believed that Lvoff had been sent by Kerensky to ascertain his views on the political situation; and he expressed them with his usual frankness, without giving them the form of an ultimatum. The rôle played by Lvoff in the affair is quite impossible to explain. He misrepresented Kerensky to Korniloff and Korniloff to Kerensky; but whether he was a knave or a fool I cannot say. He was in any case an arch mischief-maker. It was only after being called on by Kerensky to resign his command that Korniloff decided to act, and in doing so he was prompted solely by patriotic motives. But while he personally would have been ready to work with Kerensky, there were men behind him who had for weeks past been plotting to overthrow the Government and who were bent on using him as their instrument and on forcing his hand.

There were so many persons in the secret of this counter-revolutionary movement that it was a secret no longer. Kerensky knew it, so that when Lvoff brought him what purported—though quite incorrectly—to be an ultimatum from Korniloff, he was already suspicious of and predisposed against him. Though Kerensky undoubtedly regarded him as a dangerous rival, who if he once got control of the army might use it against the Government, I do not believe

that he purposely laid a trap for Korniloff in order to get him out of the way. But, like the latter, he had evil counsellors behind him who, for personal or party reasons, encouraged him to remove the commander-in-chief. That he was still hesitating to do so is shown by the fact that he had, in his telegraphic conversation with Korniloff, promised to come to the Stavka; and it was Nekrassoff who finally persuaded him to denounce the latter as a traitor. His policy throughout had been weak and vacillating; fear of the Soviet seemed to paralyse his every action; he had the chance after the July rising of suppressing the Bolsheviks once and for all—and he refused to use it; and now, instead of endeavouring to come to an understanding with him, he dismissed the one strong man capable of restoring discipline in the army. By way, moreover, of defending the revolution, which ever had the first place in his thoughts, he made the further mistake of arming the workmen, and thus played directly into the hands of the Bolsheviks. Writing to the Foreign Office on September 21, I said: "As a well-known foreign statesman remarked to me yesterday, Kerensky has two souls—one as head of the Government and a patriot and the other as a Socialist and Idealist. So long as the former is in the ascendant he issues orders for strong measures and talks of establishing an iron discipline; but, as soon as he listens to the promptings of the latter, he relapses into inaction and allows his orders to remain a dead letter. I fear, moreover, that, like the Soviet, he has never wished to create a really strong army, and that, as he once remarked to me, he will never lend a hand to forge a weapon one day to be used against the revolution."

CHAPTER XXXI

1917

THE failure of Korniloff's attempted *coup d'état* had, as I told Tereschenko, destroyed my last hopes of an improvement in the situation either at the front or in the rear, as it had deprived officers of the little authority which they previously possessed, while it had restored the waning influence of the Soviet. The latter had passed resolutions abolishing the death penalty, declaring all existing secret treaties invalid, and demanding the immediate conclusion of a universal democratic peace. They were, I said, the masters, and the Government only existed on sufferance till such time as they should decide to take the reins into their own hands. Tereschenko tried to reassure me by saying that he had told the Socialist Ministers that strong disciplinary measures must be adopted at once and that any Bolshevik rising must be sternly suppressed.

The next step taken by the Soviet was to decline to recognize Kerensky's newly formed Coalition Government, and to convoke a democratic congress for the purpose of determining the composition of a Government capable of realizing the programme of revolutionary democracy. Pending the meeting of this congress, the administration of the country was entrusted to a council of five, of whom Kerensky, Tereschenko and the Minister of War (Verkhovski)

were the principal members, on the understanding that it was to maintain close contact with the Soviet; while on September 15 the Republic was proclaimed, in order to show that the revolution had come to stay.

Kerensky had originally intended to confront the congress, that met on the 27th, with an accomplished fact, but his courage failed him, and on October 3 he submitted to its directorate the names of those whom he proposed to include in his Cabinet. He at the same time delivered a speech in which, after depicting the situation in the blackest colours, he insisted that it was only by a Coalition Government, representative of all parties, that Russia could be saved. The congress, nevertheless, proceeded to pass a series of contradictory resolutions for and against a Coalition Government, which virtually vetoed the participation of the Cadets in any Ministry, and it was only on October 9, after prolonged negotiations between Kerensky and the directorate of the congress, that a Coalition Government, which included half a dozen Cadets and Industrials, was constituted. The Petrograd Soviet, whose executive committee had been reconstituted on a Bolshevik basis under the presidency of Trotzky, at once recorded its vote against it.

Writing to the Foreign Office on the subject of the congress, I said:

"The original idea of its promoters was to give the democracy an opportunity of presenting a united front to the non-Socialist parties; but the only result has been to split up the democracy into an infinite number of small groups, and to undermine the authority of its recognized leaders. The Bolsheviks, who form a com-

pact minority, have alone a definite political programme. They are more active and better organized than any other group, and until they and the ideas which they represent are finally squashed, the country will remain a prey to anarchy and disorder. Unfortunately the more moderate Socialist leaders, like Tseretelli and Scobeleff, whose mission it is to combat their extreme doctrines in the Soviet, can never quite forget that, however wide the gulf that separates the Bolsheviks from themselves, they are nevertheless comrades and fellow-fighters in the Socialist cause. They will, therefore, never sanction the adoption of strong measures against the Bolsheviks as a party, that has brought Russia to the verge of ruin, but only against individual members of it, who are proved guilty of treasonable conduct. If the Government are not strong enough to put down the Bolsheviks by force, at the risk of breaking altogether with the Soviet, the only alternative will be a Bolshevik Government.

" Ministers are anxious to put off the Korniloff trial as long as possible, so as to allow public excitement to calm down. In defending himself in the Democratic Congress against the charge of having, to a certain extent, acted in collusion with Korniloff, Kerensky threw no new light on what actually occurred. On the other hand, he went out of his way to explain that all the extraordinary military measures adopted by the Government were taken under pressure of the ultimatums which Korniloff had addressed to them."

Though Tereschenko had consented to retain the post of Minister for Foreign Affairs in Kerensky's reconstructed Government, he had done so under

protest. He had had a serious disagreement with the Minister of War of which I had been the involuntary cause. I had complained to Tereschenko of a statement published in a Moscow Socialist paper to the effect that British armoured cars had taken part in Korniloff's ill-starred adventure, and orders had, in consequence, been given by Kerensky for the suppression of the paper. Instead of carrying out these orders, Verkhovski had contented himself with causing legal proceedings to be taken against the editor, and the paragraph of which I had complained had been reproduced. Verkhovski was young and intelligent, and had done well when in command of the Moscow district. He had in 1903 been expelled from the Corps des Pages, in which he was a Cadet, for having, during some civil disturbances, harangued the men of a lancer regiment and told them not to fire on the people. His programme for the reorganization of the army by demobilizing as many men as could be spared and by forming a smaller and more efficient force out of its better elements was sensible enough, but he was too much of an enthusiast to make a really practical War Minister.

In a conversation which I had with him on October 8, Tereschenko said that, while remaining at the Foreign Office, he had refused to act as Vice-President of the Council or to take part in any Cabinet councils, except on questions of foreign policy or on matters on which his colleagues especially desired his advice, until the Government had elaborated a definite programme. He read to me a letter which he had addressed to Kerensky tendering his resignation—a letter that constituted a scathing criticism both of the

Government and the Soviet. They had, he wrote, during the six tragic months through which Russia had passed since the revolution learnt nothing and forgotten nothing. Instead of trying to save Russia, demagogues had but thought of their own party interests and of how to control and impede the Government's action. A counter-revolution, though not necessarily a monarchical one, offered, he concluded, the only hope of saving the country. The reading of this letter, which he threatened to publish, produced a tremendous impression on his colleagues. The Cadets, who formerly had been his bitterest opponents, declared that they would not enter the Government if he left it, and he eventually withdrew his resignation.

I had, immediately after the Korniloff affair, discussed with my French, Italian and United States colleagues the question of making collective representations to the Russian Government on the subject of both the military and internal situations. At a meeting which I had convoked for the purpose we had drafted the text of a note, and had agreed to obtain from our respective Governments authorization to present it when we considered the moment opportune for doing so. In that note, after expressing the hope that, now that the danger of civil war had been averted, the Government would be able to concentrate all its energies on the prosecution of the war, we emphasized the necessity of their reorganizing all Russia's military and economic forces by the adoption of rigorous measures for the maintenance of internal order, for increasing the output of the factories, for improving the transport services, and for re-establishing strict discipline in the army. As the United States Ambas-

sador had not, for some unexplained reason, received any instructions from his Government, my French and Italian colleagues and I decided to act without him, and on October 9 we were received by Kerensky, Tereschenko and Konovaloff (the Vice-President of the Council). I began by explaining that we had some weeks ago been instructed to ask for an interview in order to discuss the situation with him, but that we had deferred doing so on account of the recent Ministerial crisis. Now, however, that a new Government had been formed under his presidency, we considered the moment opportune for acting on our instructions, more especially as it afforded us the occasion for saluting him as head of the Republican Government and offering him our sincere congratulations. I then, as doyen, read him our collective note.

Kerensky replied in Russian, Tereschenko translating what he said into French, sentence by sentence. He commenced by telling us that he would do all he could to prevent a false interpretation being placed by others on the communication which we had just made to him. The war, he then proceeded to say, was a war of nations, and not of Governments, and the Russian people had in the course of it made untold sacrifices. The Imperial régime had left the country in a deplorable state of disorganization, and it would have been better had the Allies shown less consideration for the feelings of the Emperor's Government and had called it oftener to account for its shortcomings. They had also been ill advised in hesitating, after the revolution, to continue the despatch of war material to Russia. There must, he continued, be complete union between the Allies—their interests were the same, and the

defection of one would be fatal to all alike. There must also be continuity of policy, and, in spite of all her difficulties, Russia was determined on carrying on the war to the end. He was leaving in the afternoon for the front in order to set the work of army reorganization in motion at once. He concluded by reminding us that Russia was still a great Power.

Tereschenko had hardly finished translating the last sentence when Kerensky got up, and with a wave of his hand signified that our interview was at an end. After hurriedly shaking hands with us, he made for the door. As I had some documents to give him, I followed him, and when I had explained their contents I said that I wished him to understand that our action had been inspired solely by the desire to strengthen his hands. Kerensky was always fond of theatrical effects and evidently wished to mark his displeasure by the Napoleonic touch which he gave to our dismissal. On my remarking to Tereschenko afterwards that Kerensky had no business to treat Allied Ambassadors so cavalierly, he said that Kerensky had been annoyed at our making such representations at a moment when he was doing all he could to act as we wished. He further told me that Kerensky, immediately after our interview, had called on the United States Ambassador to thank him for not having accompanied us. M. Nabokoff was subsequently instructed to read to Mr. Balfour a formal protest on the subject of our collective note, while a letter which Kerensky had addressed to Mr. Lloyd George on the military situation was held back. On Tereschenko telling me this, I remarked that, if his idea was to punish our Prime Minister for a step which the gravity of the situation fully justified,

it was a very childish proceeding on his part. Mr. Lloyd George, I added, would no doubt get over his disappointment. The letter was despatched a few days afterwards.

The Germans had towards the middle of October made a naval demonstration off the Dago and Osel Islands and landed some 12,000 men on the latter, and the Russian Government had, in consequence, appealed to us to send our fleet into the Baltic—a request with which we could not, for obvious reasons, comply. The following extract from my diary records the substance of the conversations which I had had on the subject with Tereschenko and Kerensky:

October 25.

"After observing that a naval demonstration in the Skagerak was more likely to create a diversion than any steps that we might take in the North Sea, Tereschenko said that he had felt considerable diffidence about appealing to us for assistance so long as Russia made no effort to save herself. He had, indeed, only been emboldened to do so by the gallant stand which the Russian fleet had made against a vastly superior foe.

"I replied that, while I fully recognized the gallantry displayed by the ships engaged in the recent fighting, Russia could hardly expect us to risk sacrificing our fleet, while her army, that was numerically stronger than the forces opposed to it, did but little to stem the German advance.

"In the course of our conversation Tereschenko said that in the speech which he was about to make in the Provisional Council he proposed to review the part which Russia had played in the war. In doing so he

would venture to add that France, he was sure, would never forget that Russia had sacrificed 300,000 men to save Paris, and that Italy would remember with gratitude how the pressure on her front had been relieved by Brussiloff's great offensive. He had hoped to have been able to add that Russia also would never forget the assistance rendered by the British fleet when her own fleet was threatened with destruction.

"I told Kerensky, whom I saw later in the day, that were our fleet, as Admiral Stanley had already explained to the chief of the naval general staff, to enter the Baltic, the German fleet would at once retire into the Kiel Canal, and, as our exit could be blocked by their sinking a few ships, we should be caught in a trap.

"While expressing satisfaction at our projected diversion in the North Sea, Kerensky did not conceal his disappointment. He personally, he said, understood our position, but it was difficult to explain it to the growing number of persons who were constantly complaining that the Allies were giving Russia the cold shoulder. It was even feared in certain quarters that they contemplated making peace at Russia's expense. I replied that we had already categorically denied this charge, and that he might rest assured that we would never abandon Russia if she did not first abandon herself. To make peace at her expense would be suicidal on our part. We could, however, hardly be expected to furnish her with large quantities of war material till we had some guarantee that her army would use it to good purpose. On his expressing the fear that there was a strong anti-Russian feeling both in England and France, I said that though the British public was ready

to make allowances for her difficulties, it was but natural that they should, after the fall of Riga, have abandoned all hope of her continuing to take an active part in the war. Any resentment, moreover, that they might feel was due to the fact that her army had been wantonly destroyed as a fighting force by those who were afraid of its being used against the revolution. Kerensky replied that, had it not been for the Korniloff affair, discipline would already have been to a great extent restored, but that now the work of reconstruction had to be begun all over again. We had, I rejoined, greatly appreciated the efforts which he had made to galvanize the army into life, and I believed that he could still do this. There was, however, no longer any time for half measures, and the iron discipline of which he had so often spoken must be introduced at any cost. Bolshevism was at the root of all the evils from which Russia was suffering, and if he would but eradicate it he would go down to history, not only as the leading figure of the revolution, but as the saviour of his country. Kerensky admitted the truth of what I had said, but contended that he could not do this unless the Bolsheviks themselves provoked the intervention of the Government by an armed rising. As he added that they would probably rise in the course of the next few weeks, I expressed the hope that he would not this time let the opportunity slip, as he had in July."

I must now go back a little and resume the story of the conflict of parties that was proceeding in the political arena at Petrograd. Kerensky's Government had for some time past been considering the expediency

of calling into existence a consultative chamber that might afford them moral support and act at the same time as a buffer between them and the Soviet. The Moscow conference had proved a failure on account of its composition, while the democratic conference had been the offspring of the Soviet; but a pre-parliament or provisional council, summoned by themselves as the precursor of the Constituent Assembly, would, the Government thought, strengthen their position. This idea, which had been mooted while the democratic conference was still in session, took shape, and before that conference separated the nucleus of such a council was formed by the election of three hundred of its delegates as the representatives of the different democratic groups, while a hundred and fifty representatives of the so-called bourgeois parties were subsequently added. Its functions were never very clearly defined, but the Government made it quite clear that they did not consider themselves in any way responsible for what was intended to be a purely consultative chamber.

On October 21 the Provisional Council was opened by Kerensky with a speech in which he dwelt mainly on the necessity of convoking the Constituent Assembly in the course of the next month, of restoring the fighting spirit of the army, and of putting down anarchy. After the election of Aksentiev, a moderate Socialist —who had been Minister of the Interior in one of Kerensky's Cabinets—as president, Trotzky made a violent attack on the Government and declared that the Maximalists would work neither with them nor with the council. He then left the chamber, accompanied by his thirty irreconcilable followers. The first question discussed by the council was that of the

evacuation of Petrograd; and at first there seemed a fair prospect of the bourgeois and moderate Socialist groups working together and forming a solid *bloc* against the Bolsheviks. The constitution of such a *bloc* afforded, indeed, the one and only hope of escape from the dangers which loomed ahead. The one crucial question, however, around which all interest centred, was the representation of Russia at the Allied Conference that was to meet at Paris in November. In its declaration of policy, published early in October, the Government had announced its intention of participating in that conference, and of including among Russia's representatives a delegate possessing the special confidence of the democratic organizations of the country. Those representatives, they further stated, would not only discuss with the representatives of the Allied Governments the military questions raised at the conference, but would also endeavour to negotiate an agreement based on the principles proclaimed by the Russian revolution. In making this declaration the Government had wished to placate the Soviet, who had not only demanded assurances as to the subjects to be discussed at the conference, but had also claimed the right to be represented at it. Tereschenko had always admitted that the first task of the conference was to consider how the war could be brought to a speedy and victorious end, but he had also held that a discussion of the means must necessarily entail a consideration of the ends. He had also recognized that Russia could not speak with two voices, and that he, as head of the Russian Government, must be the sole mouthpiece of the Russian Government and people.

The democratic representative, therefore, would, as

Tereschenko told the Socialists, have to play but a passive rôle as a delegate appointed by the Government, and, though free to express to him personally the views of the Russian democracy, would not be at liberty to voice them at the conference. The Soviet, who took a very different view of the matter, had already chosen Scobeleff, the former Minister of Labour, as their representative, and had furnished him with instructions which reflected their own ultra-pacifist sentiments. The Allied Governments, on the other hand, while ready to discuss the situation with the Russian delegates in an informal manner, had no wish to see the question of peace terms raised at a regular conference. They did not, moreover, relish the idea of the presence at such a conference of a representative of the Soviet. I, personally, thought that it would be a mistake on our part either to veto the discussion of peace terms or to raise difficulties about Scobeleff attending it. Such a discussion, as I pointed out, need not commit us in any way, while we could count on Tereschenko keeping the latter in his place. I had a twofold reason for wishing to humour the Socialists. In the first place, though Russia could not be expected to play more than a passive rôle, it was incumbent on us to try and keep her in the war so that her vast resources should not be exploited by Germany, and, in the second, I was afraid that if we drove the more moderate Socialists into opposition we should promote the triumph of Bolshevism.

On October 31 Tereschenko delivered a speech in the Provisional Council in which he not only made a firm stand against the Soviet's claim to any separate representation at the conference, but also denounced in no

measured language the instructions which they had given to Scobeleff. While his speech did not go far enough to satisfy the right, the Socialists complained that his uncompromising attitude on the subject of their instructions had rendered co-operation between the Government and the democracy almost impossible. In the discussion which followed Tereschenko was bitterly attacked, and on the following day Scobeleff told Kerensky that, unless the Government sent someone else to Paris, revolutionary democracy would give up all idea of being represented at the conference. The leaders of the different democratic groups, whom Kerensky consulted, all supported Scobeleff, and warned Kerensky that if Tereschenko went to the conference the Government would find its relations with the left wing of the Provisional Council seriously compromised.

CHAPTER XXXII

1917

RUMOURS of a Bolshevik rising had been circulating for some weeks past, and it was generally expected that it would take place a few days before the meeting of the all-Russian congress of Soviets. Tereschenko had even admitted that most of the troops of the garrison had been won over by the Bolsheviks, but Kerensky was more optimistic. He had in my recent conversations with him more than once exclaimed, "I only wish that they would come out, and I will then put them down." It had been arranged that Tereschenko was to leave for London on November 8 on his way to the Paris conference, and that we were to accompany him, as the Government wished to consult me with regard to the situation in Russia.

It will, I think, help my readers to follow the development of events during the last two months which I spent in Russia if I record them in the form of extracts from my diary:

November 2.

"Tereschenko, whom I met this afternoon at the Provisional Council, told me that Scobeleff had to-day held more conciliatory language and had spoken of the instructions which he had received as representing, not

the demands, but the wishes of the Russian democracy as to the attitude to be adopted by their delegate should the subjects touched on come up for discussion at the conference. The question as to whether Scobeleff would accompany him to Paris would not, he added, be settled till the close of the debate on Monday, the 5th. Tereschenko is much perturbed by the statement recently made in the House of Commons that the conference will deal exclusively with the conduct of the war. It had, he said, greatly added to his difficulties, as, though the conduct of the war must naturally form the main object of discussion, it was unnecessary to tell the Russian democracy at such a critical moment as the present that all discussion of our war aims would be barred."

November 3.

"Verkhovski, the Minister of War, has resigned. He had always contended that if the troops were to be kept in the trenches they must be told what they were fighting for, and that we ought, therefore, to publish our peace terms and to throw the responsibility for the continuance of the war on the Germans. At last night's meeting of the committee of the Provisional Council he seems to have completely lost his head, declaring that Russia must make peace at once, and that, when once peace had been concluded, a military dictator must be appointed to ensure the maintenance of order. On Tereschenko, who was supported by all the other members of the committee, demanding the withdrawal of this declaration, he tendered his resignation, which was accepted."

November 3.

"The arrival this afternoon of a guard of cadets of the military school for the protection of the Embassy indicates the approach of a storm."

November 5.

"I heard this morning that the executive committee of the Soviet had decided to form a Government, and at half-past twelve one of the cadets sent me a message to say that the Bolsheviks would oust the Ministers from their respective departments in the course of the next few days.

"At one o'clock the three Ministers—Tereschenko, Konovaloff and Tetriakoff—whom I had asked to luncheon arrived quite unmoved. On my remarking that after the reports which had reached me that morning I had hardly expected to see them, they said that those reports, to say the least, were premature. Tereschenko then told me that he had, on the preceding evening, gone to Kerensky and had persuaded him to issue an order for the arrest of the executive committee of the Soviet, but that after he had left that order had been cancelled on the advice of a third person. They all three assured me that the Government had sufficient force behind them to deal with the situation, though Tetriakoff spoke very disparagingly of Kerensky, saying that he was too much of a Socialist to be relied on to put down anarchy. I told him that I could not understand how a Government that respected itself could allow Trotzky to go on inciting the masses to murder and pillage without arresting him, and Konovaloff said that he quite agreed. The Russian revolution, he remarked, had passed through several

phases and we had now arrived at the last. He trusted that I would, before leaving for England, see a great change in the situation. Turning to Tereschenko, I said: 'I shan't believe that we are really going till we are in the train.' 'And I,' he replied, 'not till we have crossed the Swedish frontier.'

"Unless Kerensky is prepared to throw in his lot unreservedly with those of his colleagues who advocate a firm, continuous policy, the sooner he goes the better. The Government is but a Government in name and things cannot be much worse than they are at present. Even if they have to make way for the Bolsheviks, the latter would not be able to hold out for long, and would sooner or later provoke a counter-revolution.

"Tereschenko spoke again this afternoon in the Provisional Council, but on the question being put to the vote there was a majority against the Government. The resolution eventually adopted, while condemning the contemplated Bolshevik rising, threw the responsibility for the crisis on the Government. The situation, it affirmed, could only be saved by transferring the control of the land to the land committees and by inducing the Allies to publish their conditions and to commence negotiations for peace. In order, moreover, to cope with any counter-revolutionary or subversive movement it advocated the formation of a committee of public safety, composed of representatives of the organs of revolutionary democracy, that was to act in concert with the Provisional Government."

November 6.

"Tereschenko tells me that there were troubles last night in the suburbs and other quarters of the town;

that the Bolsheviks had intended organizing an armed demonstration; that their courage failed them at the last moment and that it had been countermanded. They had, moreover, formed a revolutionary military committee, which has issued an injunction to the troops forbidding them to obey any orders which are not countersigned by themselves.

"At three o'clock this morning the printing presses of several Bolshevik papers, which the Government had decided to suppress, were seized, and Tereschenko expects that this will provoke a Bolshevik rising. He is urging Kerensky to arrest the members of the revolutionary military committee, and will not in any case leave for London till the situation has been cleared up."

November 7.

"Yesterday evening the executive committee of the Soviet decided to arrest the Ministers and to form a Government themselves. On telephoning this morning to the Ministry I was informed that Tereschenko had given up all idea of going to London and that he could not see me. A little later I heard that all the troops of the garrison had obeyed the summons of the Bolsheviks and that the whole town, including the State Bank, stations, post and telegraph offices, were in their hands.

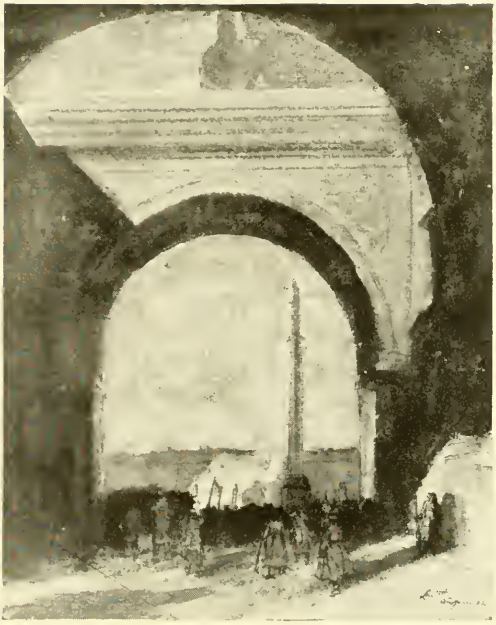
"All the Ministers are in the Winter Palace, and their motors, which had been left unguarded in the adjoining square, have been either damaged or seized by the soldiers. About ten in the morning Kerensky sent out an officer to try to get him another motor. The officer found Whitehouse, one the secretaries of the United States Embassy, and persuaded him to lend

Kerensky his car with the American flag. They drove back together to the Winter Palace. After telling Whitehouse that he proposed driving to Luga to join the troops which had been summoned from the front, he begged him to ask the Allied Ambassadors not to recognize the Bolshevik Government, as he hoped to return on the 12th with sufficient troops to re-establish the situation.

"At 4 A.M. this morning the Provisional Government called out the Cossacks, but the latter refused to act alone, as they had never forgiven Kerensky for having, after the July rising in which some of their comrades had been killed, prevented them putting down the Bolsheviks, as well as for having proclaimed their chosen leader, Korniloff, a traitor. About 8 A.M. the cruiser *Aurora* and three other ships arrived from Cronstadt and landed sailors, while sections of the armoured car detachments, which had originally declared for the Government, now joined the Bolsheviks. Though a certain amount of firing went on during the day, the Bolsheviks practically met with no resistance, as the Government had neglected to organize any force for their own protection. In the afternoon I walked down the quay to the Winter Palace Square and watched from a distance the troops surrounding one of the Government buildings, whose evacuation had been demanded. The aspect of the quay itself was more or less normal except for the groups of armed soldiers stationed near the bridges."

November 8.

"At six o'clock yesterday evening armoured cars took up positions at all points commanding the



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THE ATTACK ON THE WINTER PALACE

(*From a painting by Mr. Lintott, reproduced by kind permission of the artist*)

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BURIAL OF VICTIMS OF THE REVOLUTION

(*From a painting by Mr. Lintott, reproduced by kind permission of the artist*)

approaches to the Winter Palace, and shortly afterwards delegates from the revolutionary committee came and demanded its unconditional surrender. As no answer was returned the signal for attack was given by the firing at 9 P.M. of a few blank rounds by the guns of the fortress and of the cruiser *Aurora*. The bombardment which followed was kept up continually till ten o'clock, when there was a lull for about an hour. At eleven o'clock it began again, while all the time, as we watched it from the Embassy windows, the trams were running as usual over the Troitski Bridge. The garrison of the palace consisted mainly of cadets from the military school and of a company of the women's battalion—for Russian women had been fighting at the front, and had by their courage and patriotism set a bright example that ought to have shamed the men. There was, however, no organized defence, and the casualties on either side were but few in number. The Ministers meanwhile must have passed through a terrible ordeal as they moved about from room to room, not knowing what fate was in store for them. By half-past two in the morning parties of the attacking force had penetrated into the palace by side entrances and disarmed the garrison. The Ministers were then arrested and marched off through hostile crowds to the fortress. They seem to have been well treated by the commandant, who apparently thought it prudent to make friends with the mammon of unrighteousness for fear, as he remarked to someone, that the tables might be one day turned and that he might find himself an occupant of one of their cells.

" I walked out this afternoon to see the damage that

had been done to the Winter Palace by the prolonged bombardment of the previous evening, and to my surprise found that, in spite of the near range, there were on the river side but three marks where the shrapnel had struck. On the town side the walls were riddled with thousands of bullets from machine guns, but not one shot from a field gun that had been fired from the opposite side of the Palace Square had struck the building. In the interior very considerable damage was done by the soldiers and workmen, who looted or smashed whatever they could lay hands on.

"In the evening two officer instructors of the women's battalion came to my wife and beseeched her to try and save the women defenders of the Winter Palace, who, after they had surrendered, had been sent to one of the barracks, where they were being most brutally treated by the soldiers. General Knox at once drove to the Bolshevik headquarters at the Smolny Institute. His demands for their immediate release were at first refused on the ground that they had resisted desperately, fighting to the last with bombs and revolvers. Thanks, however, to his firmness and persistency, the order for their release was eventually signed, and the women were saved from the fate that would inevitably have befallen them had they spent the night in the barracks."

November 9.

"Aksentieff, the president of the Provisional Council, who came to see me to-day, assured me that, though the Bolsheviks had succeeded in overthrowing the Government owing to the latter's criminal want of foresight, they would not hold out many days. At last

night's meeting of the Congress of All Russian Soviets they had found themselves completely isolated, as all the other Socialist groups had denounced their methods and had refused to take any further part in the proceedings. The Council of Peasants had also pronounced against them. The Municipal Council, he went on to say, was forming a Committee of Public Safety composed of representatives of the Provisional Council, the Central Committee of the Soviet, the Peasants' Council, and the Committee of Delegates from the front; while the troops, which were expected from Pskov, would probably arrive in a couple of days. I told him that I did not share his confidence.

"I received to-day the following reply from Mr. Balfour to my telegram informing him that I was remaining on at Petrograd:

> I appreciate your intention to remain at your post, and wish to give you once more an assurance of the sympathy of His Majesty's Government and of their complete confidence in your discretion and judgment. You have, of course, full discretion to leave for Moscow or any other place, should you think it desirable to do so, and you should pay special attention to your own personal safety."

November 10.

"The Bolsheviks have formed a Government, with Lenin as First Commissary and Trotzky as Commissary for Foreign Affairs. It is to be called 'The Council of the People's Commissaries,' and is to act under the immediate control of the Central Committee of the All Russian Congress of Soviets. Trotzky went this afternoon to the Ministry and sent for the members of the staff, and expressed the hope that he could count on

their collaboration. They all refused, and some of the lady clerks even told him that he was a German. He asked Tattischef, Tereschenko's *Chef de Cabinet*, whether the Ambassadors would call on him or whether he ought to pay them the first visit. On being told that the usual procedure was for a new Minister to inform them by letter of his assumption of office, he said that such a procedure was all very well under the old régime but hardly suited present conditions. One paper announced that he had called on me but had not got further than the doormat; and I, quite undeservedly, received in the afternoon a bouquet of flowers from some 'Young Russians,' with 'Bravo! Thank you!' written on a card. The example set by the staff of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has been followed in most of the other Ministries, and the machinery of government is consequently at a standstill.

"The All Russian Congress of Soviets yesterday published a decree, appealing to the democracies of all belligerent Powers to assist them in relieving humanity from the horrors of war, and proposing an immediate armistice of three months to allow time for the conclusion of a democratic peace without annexations or contributions. The term 'annexations,' it was explained, referred to the forcible retention of any foreign territory irrespective of the date of its occupation. The Congress further decreed the nationalization of the land.

"The Committee of Public Safety appears to favour the formation of a purely Socialist Government, exclusive of, but relying on, the support of the Cadets. They are united in their wish to suppress the Bolsheviks,

but there their union ends, some being in favour of adopting the Bolshevist programme with regard to peace and the land, while the others are strongly opposed to such a course.

"Paget telegraphs from Copenhagen that our Military Attaché had been informed by an escaped Russian prisoner that he had been engaged by the Germans as an agent for anti-British propaganda in Petrograd. He had, he said, been instructed to get into touch with the Bolsheviks and to arrange, among other things, for my assassination. I have also received a copy of a leaflet, which the Germans have recently been dropping from aeroplanes among the Russian troops on the southern front, telling them that though they had got rid of Tsar Nicholas, the British Ambassador was still enthroned as Tsar at Petrograd, that he imposed his wishes on the Russian Government, and that so long as he remained reigning in Russia and drinking Russian blood they would never have peace or liberty.

"Korniloff has succeeded in escaping and has joined Kaledin in the south. They are believed to be masters of the Donetz basin. Kerensky is utterly discredited with all parties, and the troops, if they do come to Petrograd, will not fight to restore his Government, but to support the Socialist groups who have turned against the revolution."

November 11.

"The last two days have passed without disturbance, and yesterday it was generally believed that Kerensky's troops would be here by now and that the situation would be liquidated. Acting under this belief, the Committee of Public Safety encouraged the cadets of

the military schools to occupy the Central Telephone Office and to act on the offensive in other parts of the town. The situation has in consequence once more become acute, and there is firing all over the town.

"Our guard of eight cadets distinguished themselves the other day by appropriating a case of whisky and a case of claret belonging to the secretaries. Most of them were ill the next day, and some were sick in the hall. So far from their protecting us, it is rather we who are protecting them. Luckily an extra guard of Polish soldiers with an officer was given us on Friday, and we have managed to send the cadets safely home dressed up as civilians."

November 12.

"The telephone station was recaptured yesterday by a combined force of soldiers, sailors and workmen, but not without casualties on both sides. Detachments of troops with field guns then surrounded the different military schools and demanded their unconditional surrender. At one of them, where serious resistance was offered, it is said that the casualties exceeded two hundred and that several cadets were thrown out from the windows on the top story. By 10 P.M. the Bolsheviks were once more in possession of the whole town."

November 13.

"Kerensky has again failed us, as he did at the time of the July rising and of the Korniloff affair. His only chance of success was to make a dash for Petrograd with such troops as he could get hold of; but he wasted

time in parleying, issued orders and counter-orders which indisposed the troops, and only moved when it was too late. The Bolsheviks have reoccupied Tsarskoe and are now confident of victory. In Petrograd they are supported by the ships which they have brought up from Cronstadt, one of which is anchored close to the Embassy. Were the Cossacks now to try to effect an entry the town would probably be bombarded. We are so entirely cut off from the outside world that we know but little of what is passing in the Provinces; but at Moscow, where a regular battle has been going on for the last few days, the Bolsheviks are regaining the upper hand. The number of killed is said to be about a couple of thousand, and the town appears to be given over to pillage at the hands of a drunken mob that had seized the spirit stores.

"Nobody at the Embassy or in the colony has so far suffered, but we are still having a very anxious time. Yesterday a report reached us from two sources that an attack was to be made on the Embassy in the course of the night. In addition to our Polish guard we have six British officers sleeping in the house, and Knox, who acts as commander-in-chief, is a tower of strength in these troublous times. Though the Bolsheviks, who want to stand well with the Allies, are hardly likely to encourage such an attack, there is always the danger that German agents may incite the Red Guard to raid the Embassy in order to cause friction between Great Britain and Russia. In spite of the measures taken for the maintenance of order, life is not very secure at present, and this morning a Russian petty officer was shot dead in front of our windows for refusing to give up his sword to some armed workmen."

November 14.

"Verkhovski came to see me to-day. He said that Kerensky had not wanted the Cossacks to suppress the rising by themselves, as that would have meant the end of the revolution. He declared that the moderate Socialists still had a chance of forming a Government, and said that if he were authorized to tell the troops that the Allies would discuss and draw up their peace terms for presentation to the Germans he would be able to detach many of them from the Bolsheviks."

November 17.

"The Cossacks under Krasnov, who were to have come to Petrograd, have made terms with the Bolsheviks, and Kerensky has escaped dressed as a sailor.

"The situation is now hopeless, as the Bolsheviks are masters in the north and at Moscow; and though Kaledin holds the south, there is no chance of his making headway in the north."

CHAPTER XXXIII

1917

KERENSKY'S Government had fallen, as the Empire had fallen, without a struggle. Both the Emperor and he had been wilfully blind to the dangers which threatened them, and both had allowed the situation to get beyond their control before taking any measures for their own protection. It was only when his hour had already struck and when, as Rodzianko telegraphed, it was too late that the Emperor consented to grant a constitution. It was the same with Kerensky. He waited and procrastinated. When at last he made up his mind to act, he found that the Bolsheviks had secured the support of the garrison and that it was he, and not they, who was to be suppressed. If I had to write the epitaphs of the Empire and the Provisional Government, I would do so in two words—lost opportunities.

From the very first Kerensky had been the central figure of the revolutionary drama and had, alone among his colleagues, acquired a sensible hold on the masses. An ardent patriot, he desired to see Russia carry on the war till a democratic peace had been won; while he wanted to combat the forces of disorder so that his country should not fall a prey to anarchy. In the early days of the revolution he displayed an energy and courage which marked him out as the one man capable

of securing the attainment of these ends. But he did not act up to his professions, and every time that a crisis came he failed to rise to the occasion. He was, as subsequent events proved, a man of words and not of action; he had his chances and he never seized them; he was always going to strike and he never struck; he thought more of saving the revolution than of saving his country, and he ended by losing both. But while, as head of the Government, invested with full powers, of which he had made but a sorry use, he must bear the chief responsibility for Russia's surrender to the Bolsheviks, the other party leaders cannot be acquitted of all blame. The moderate Socialists, the Cadets and the other non-Socialist groups all contributed their share to the final catastrophe. For in a crisis which called for their close collaboration they failed to sink their party differences and to work whole-heartedly together for the salvation of their country.

The Socialists, obsessed by the fear of a counter-revolution, shrank from the adoption of measures that alone could make the army an effective fighting force. The Cadets, on the other hand, insisted, and rightly, on the restoration of discipline in the army and on the maintenance of order in the rear. But instead of trying to convince the Socialists by the correctness of their attitude that they had nothing to fear from a well-disciplined army, they went out of their way to create the impression that they were secretly working for a counter-revolution, in which the army was to be the dominant factor. Party spirit, unfortunately, ran too high to admit of any sustained collective effort against the common enemy. The inability of Russians to work cordially together, even when the

fate of their country is at stake, amounts almost to a national defect. Whenever, as one of their own statesmen once said to me, a dozen or more Russians meet round a table to discuss some important question, they will talk for hours without coming to a decision and end by quarrelling among themselves. The one member of the Government who tried throughout, but failed, to keep his colleagues in line and to induce them to pursue a firm, consistent policy was Tereschenko. Belonging to no party, he thought only of his country; but, owing to his misplaced confidence in Kerensky, he took, and sometimes induced me to take, a too optimistic view of the situation. He only realized when it was too late how weak a reed to lean on was his chosen leader.

The Bolsheviks, on the other hand, constituted a compact minority of determined men, who knew what they wanted and how to get it. They had, moreover, all the best brains on their side and, with the help of their German patrons, they developed a talent for organization with which no one had at first credited them. Much as I detest their terroristic methods and much as I deplore the ruin and misery which they have brought on their country, I readily admit that Lenin and Trotzky are both extraordinary men. The Ministers, in whose hands Russia had placed her destinies, had all proved to be weak and incapable, and now by some cruel turn of fate the only two really strong men whom she had produced during the war were destined to consummate her ruin. On their advent to power, however, they were still an unknown quantity, and nobody expected that they would have a long tenure of office. The outlook, indeed, was so

obscure that one could but grope in the dark. I gave my general impressions of the present without attempting to forecast the future, and, as will be seen from the following extracts from my diary, those impressions were not always right.

November 18.

"The Bolsheviks are gaining more adherents at the front, and the Ukrainian party has made common cause with them. They have distributed arms among the workmen."

November 19.

"There is no progress to report as regards the formation of a Coalition Socialist Government. On the other hand, there has been a serious split in the ranks of the Bolsheviks, and eight of the fourteen commissaries have tendered their resignation as a protest against such arbitrary measures as the suppression of liberty of the Press, etc. The Government is now in the hands of a small clique of extremists, who are bent on imposing their will on the country by terroristic methods. There are signs of growing dissatisfaction at the prolongation of the crisis, both among the troops and the workmen, and several factories have sent delegates to the Smolni Institute to tell the Bolsheviks that they must come to an agreement with the other Socialist organizations. Some of them held very outspoken language, saying that all that Lenin and Trotzky wanted was to sleep, as Kerensky had done, in Nicholas's bed. It was hoped at first that the secession of so many of their leaders would bring the more moderate members of their party into line with

the representatives of the other Socialistic groups, and that a Government would be formed from which Lenin and Trotzky would be excluded. This hope has not been realized, and the extremists are now making great efforts to win over the left wing of the Social Revolutionary party and to induce the seceding members of their own party to return. If they succeed in this they will consolidate their position for the time being; but if the peace which they have promised is long delayed and if the supply of bread, which is getting scarcer every day, fails, the masses may rise and overthrow them. Except in the Ministry of War, the majority of the departmental staffs are still on strike. The supply of coal on the railways is getting dangerously short; the army and the large towns are threatened with famine; and, sooner or later, the whole machinery of government must break down altogether. What will happen then it is impossible to say. Some people declare that we shall have a monarchy in a couple of months. But, though a large section of the population is disenchanted with the revolution, I do not see how such a change is to be effected, unless Kaledin succeeds in rallying the army round him—and there is but little likelihood of his doing so. At the present moment force alone counts, and as the *bourgeois* parties have neglected to organize themselves for defensive purposes, the Bolsheviks have it all their own way. During the recent fighting at Petrograd and Moscow the cadets of the military schools alone sided with the Government, and, being without officers and hopelessly outnumbered, sacrificed their lives in vain. At Moscow there are said to have been as many as five thousand casualties, as owing to the haphazard

firing of the Red Guard the civil population lost heavily.

"Here everything is quiet for the moment, but if food supplies fail we shall be faced with a very serious situation. As a precautionary measure we are having stores brought into the Embassy and arranging to house all the staff, as well as the officers belonging to the various military missions, so as to form, if necessary, a strong garrison for its defence."

November 20.

"It would not do for me to leave Petrograd, as my presence here reassures the colony, and it is better that I should remain and await events. My Allied colleagues, with whom I have discussed the question of the attitude which we should adopt towards the new Government when it is formed, all agree that we cannot recognize it officially, but differ as to whether we should or should not enter into unofficial relations with it. I personally am of opinion that we must establish some sort of contact with it for the conduct of certain current affairs.

"Mr. Balfour agreed that this was essential in the interests of the Allied Colonies, and it was decided that our Consuls should, when necessary, serve as the channel of communication between us and the Government."

November 20.

"Scobeleff, the ex-Minister of Labour, and Chaikovsky, the president of the Provisional Council, representing, as they said, the working classes and the peasantry, came to see me to-day. They told me that

a Socialist Government, exclusive of the Bolsheviks, was about to be formed, that it would include representatives of the Cossack democracy, and that it would be supported by the Cadets. On my asking how they proposed to put down the Bolsheviks, they replied—by force. They could, they asserted, count on certain troops, sufficient for the purpose, as the army cared nothing for the Bolsheviks and only wanted peace. Russia was worn out and could not fight any more; but if they were to succeed they must be authorized to tell the army that the Allies were prepared to discuss peace terms with a view to bringing the war to a speedy conclusion. Such an assurance would, they said, give them a great advantage over the Bolsheviks, with whom the Allied Governments would not treat.

"I replied that, though the Allied Governments might consent to discuss peace terms with such a Government were it once constituted, they could give no assurance as regarded the early termination of the war, for they could not, after all their sacrifices, accept a premature peace that offered no guarantee for the future. Russia could only purchase peace on terms disastrous to herself, and it was surely to her interest to make an effort to hold out, without trying to take the offensive, till we had defeated Germany. After consulting together they said that, if they received an assurance that the Allies would hold a conference for the discussion of peace terms and would endeavour to arrive at an agreement with regard to those terms, they might be able to form a small army for defensive purposes. Scobeleff, who was to leave in the evening for the Stavka to meet other Socialist leaders, asked

whether he might give a provisional assurance to the above effect in my name; but I told him that all that I could do was to submit this proposal to my Government."

November 21.

"A meeting of compositors was held this afternoon to protest against the suppression of so many newspapers. On their threatening to strike they were told that, if they carried out this threat, they would be made to work twenty-four hours a day with soldiers standing behind them to prod them in the back with their bayonets if they slacked their work.

"The following story is worth recording as illustrating the curious mentality of the Russian peasant. It was told me by a friend, who vouched for its truth. A landlord was recently condemned to death by the Bolsheviks, and his peasants were told to carry out the sentence. They went to him one morning, fell on their knees, kissed his hand, and thanked him for having been such a good master. They had, however, received orders which they were bound to obey, and they must ask him to accompany them. They then took him to a neighbouring wood and killed him in the most cold-blooded way.

"On the night of the 20th Ensign Krilenko, who was in charge of the Ministry of War, acting under Lenin's instructions, sent a wireless message to General Dukhonin, the commander-in-chief, ordering him to propose an armistice to the German commanders, with a view to the commencement of peace negotiations. The Allied representatives in Petrograd had, the message added, already been told of the step which

the Government was about to take. This latter statement was not correct, as it was only late in the evening of the 21st that I received a note from Trotzky informing me of the constitution of the Government and submitting a proposal for an armistice and for the immediate opening of peace negotiations. Trotzky had further, on the same day, announced his intention of publishing all the secret agreements. In telegraphing the above to the Foreign Office, I suggested that no reply should be returned to Trotzky's note, but that His Majesty's Government should make a statement in the House of Commons to the effect that, while ready to discuss peace terms with a legally constituted Government, they could not do so with one that had broken the engagements taken by one of its predecessors under the agreement of September 5, 1914.

"General Dukhonin has replied that, while agreeing that peace is necessary in Russia's interests, he considers that negotiations for peace can only be advantageously conducted by a Government that is recognized by the country as a whole. He has in consequence been superseded by Ensign Krilenko. The latter has issued a proclamation calling on all the different army committees to elect their representatives and to open negotiations for an armistice at once.

"Chaikovsky came to see me again to-day before proceeding to the front, where, as he told me, some twenty representative men had already gone, for the purpose of forming a new Government and of organizing a force strong enough to suppress the Bolsheviks. He spoke with great confidence of the approaching fall of the latter. On my telling him that I did not share his confidence, he had to admit that

the Bolsheviks, by proposing an armistice, had stolen a march on him and his friends."

November 24.

"The Mayor of Petrograd called to-day to assure me that Russian democracy strongly condemned the opening of negotiations for a separate armistice and the publication of our secret agreements. He takes far too optimistic a view of the political outlook. In the course of our conversation he remarked that were the Allied representatives to leave Russia it would be a severe blow to true democracy and to all classes in the country except the Bolsheviks."

November 25.

"The Allied military representatives at headquarters have protested officially to Dukhonin against the infraction of the agreement of September, 1914, and told him that it might have the most serious consequences. The veiled threat contained in the last words has been interpreted to mean that we are about to call on Japan to attack Russia. It was an ill-advised step that has done us any amount of harm. Trotzky has in consequence issued a fiery appeal to the soldiers, peasants and workmen against our interference in Russian affairs. He told them that our imperialistic Governments were trying to whip them back to the trenches and to make cannon fodder of them. He urged the soldiers to elect their representatives and to open negotiations at once with the Germans.

"The elections for the Constituent Assembly commenced to-day. At yesterday's meeting of the garrison,

which was attended by representatives of all the political groups, the Bolsheviks obtained what virtually amounted to a vote of confidence."

November 27.

"Trotzky has communicated to the Allied military attachés a note asserting that his Government never desired a separate but a general peace, but that it was determined to have peace. It will, the note concluded, be the fault of the Allied Governments if Russia has after all to make a separate peace."

November 27.

"I have come to the conclusion that the only thing for us to do is to *faire bonne mine à mauvais jeu.* Acting on an idea originally suggested by Knox, I have telegraphed to the Foreign Office as follows:

I share the view, already expressed by General Knox, that the situation here has become so desperate that we must reconsider our attitude. In my opinion, the only safe course left to us is to give Russia back her word and to tell her people that, realizing how worn out they are by the war and the disorganization inseparable from a great revolution, we leave it to them to decide whether they will purchase peace on Germany's terms or fight on with the Allies, who are determined not to lay down their arms till binding guarantees for the world's peace have been secured.

It has always been my one aim and object to keep Russia in the war, but one cannot force an exhausted nation to fight against its will. If anything could tempt Russia to make one more effort, it would be the knowledge that she was perfectly free to act as she pleased, without any pressure from the Allies.

There is evidence to show that Germany is trying to make

an irreparable breach between us and Russia, so as to pave the way for the German protectorate which she hopes eventually to establish over the latter. For us to hold to our pound of flesh and to insist on Russia fulfilling her obligations, under the 1914 Agreement, is to play Germany's game. Every day that we keep Russia in the war against her will does but embitter her people against us. If we release her from those obligations, the national resentment will turn against Germany if peace is delayed or purchased on too onerous terms. For us it is a matter of life and death to checkmate this latest German move, for a Russo-German Alliance after the war would constitute a perpetual menace to Europe, and more especially to Great Britain.

I am not advocating any transaction with the Bolshevik Government. On the contrary, I believe that the adoption of the course which I have suggested will take the wind out of their sails, as they will no longer be able to reproach the Allies with driving Russian soldiers to the slaughter for their Imperialistic aims."

November 28.

"I have received a note from Trotzky demanding the release of two Russians—Chicherin and Petroff—who have been interned in England for the anti-war propaganda which they have apparently been making among our workmen. Russian democracy would not, the note went on to say, tolerate the imprisonment of two innocent fellow countrymen and allow British subjects who were carrying on an active propaganda in favour of a counter-revolution to go unpunished."

December 3.

"Trotzky, I hear, is very angry with me for not answering his note. On my sending Consul Woodhouse to endeavour to obtain the necessary permission

for some of our subjects to go home, he said that it had been decided that no British subjects would be allowed to leave Russia till the question of the two interned Russians had been satisfactorily settled. He added that Chicherin was a personal friend of his, and he was particularly anxious to secure his release as he proposed appointing him his diplomatic representative in one of the Allied capitals. In the event of our Government refusing to release him he threatened to arrest certain British subjects whom he knew to be counter-revolutionaries.

"About half-past nine the same evening General Niessel, the French military representative, came to see me. Trotzky, he said, had told a French officer, who was a Socialist and in close touch with the Bolsheviks, that he had a special grudge against me, not because I was indisposing my Government against him, but because I had, ever since the overthrow of the late Government, not only been in constant touch with Kaledin and the committee of public safety, but had even supplied the latter with funds. He was therefore contemplating arresting me, and should this lead to a rupture of relations between our two Governments he would keep a certain number of British subjects as hostages. General Niessel did not think that Trotzky would dare arrest me in the Embassy, but as he knows that I am in the habit of taking a daily walk he might do so when I was out of doors. By way of cheering me, the General added that, from inquiries which he had made, he believed that the most comfortable cells in the fortress were between the Numbers 30 and 36 and that should the worst happen I had better bear this in mind."

I did not take Trotzky's threat too seriously and continued my walks as usual without any unpleasant consequences. Only once, as I was turning into a side street off the quay, I nearly got into the middle of a fight that was going on at the other end. I was fortunately stopped in time by a friend of ours, Princess Marie Troubetzkoi, who happened to be passing. She assured me that she had saved my life, and insisted on seeing me safe home to the Embassy, as no one would, she said, attack me if I was with a lady.

December 4.

"Our position is becoming very difficult as, while it is impossible for our Government to yield to threats, it is very hard on our subjects, who have come here from the provinces on their way home, to be put to the expense of remaining on indefinitely. I do not, moreover, at all want to see the members of our propaganda bureau arrested. There is, after all, something in Trotzky's argument that, if we claim the right to arrest Russians for making a pacifist propaganda in a country bent on continuing the war, he has an equal right to arrest British subjects who are conducting a war propaganda in a country bent on peace. He has further got it in his power to prevent our couriers coming or going and even to stop us leaving if we are recalled. Noulens hears from the French Consul at Helsingfors that there is an idea of arresting us should we pass through Finland on our way home. Our Consul in that town has also been informed by a Finnish banker that a German agent, who has an expert knowledge of bombs, has recently arrived there,

charged, among other things, with the mission of blowing up our train on its way through Finland.

"In order to put an end to the uncertainty prevailing as to our attitude, I have, in a *communiqué* to the Press, explained that we cannot recognize the present Government, and that I have been instructed to abstain from any step that might imply recognition. Trotzky's note proposing a general armistice had, I pointed out, been only delivered at the Embassy nineteen hours after General Dukhonin had received the order to open pourparlers with the enemy. The Allies had thus been confronted with an accomplished fact on which they had not been consulted. Although I had telegraphed to the Foreign Office the substance of all the notes which Trotzky had addressed to me, I could not reply to the notes of a Government which my own Government did not recognize. A Government, moreover, which, like mine, derived its powers direct from the people could not take a decision on a matter of such grave importance without first assuring itself that that decision would meet with the approval and sanction of the people."

December 6.

"Trotzky has published a reply to the effect that the Allied Governments had been made aware of his intention to propose a general armistice by the appeal, which the Soviet had addressed to the democracies of the world on November 8. If his note had reached the Embassy rather late, this was entirely due to secondary causes of a technical character. I hear that the Soviet disapproves of Trotzky's recent attitude towards me."

December 7.

"Opinions are so divided as to the strength of the Bolsheviks that it is very difficult to see clearly ahead. While the pessimists predict massacres, the optimists assert that their reign is drawing to a close, that they will not dare to dissolve the Constituent Assembly should it declare against them, and that if we only hold out till that assembly meets the situation will change to our advantage. I rather doubt this, as a good many Bolsheviks have been returned in the provinces, and, as they are the only party with any real force behind them, they will probably be the ruling power for some time to come. During the past few days there have been signs of a desire on their part to establish better relations with the Allies, and certain recommendations respecting the terms of the armistice which the Serbian Minister communicated privately to Trotzky were well received by the latter.

"I sent Captain Smith (the Embassy translator) yesterday to Trotzky to see if it was possible to come to some understanding with him with regard to the British subjects who want to leave Russia. I told him to explain that, while I could not advise my Government to yield to threats, I would ask them to reconsider the case of the two interned Russian citizens if he, on his part, would rescind the order forbidding the departure of our subjects. Trotzky replied that in the note which he had addressed to me he had not intended to convey a threat and that I must make allowance for his ignorance of diplomatic language. He had only wished to make it clear that the same treatment must be meted out to Russians in England as to Englishmen in Russia. It was only four days later, after

receiving no reply to his note and after reading in the Press that I had declined to forward his note to my Government (the statement that had appeared in the Press to the above effect was false), that he had issued the order in question. He had also thought it well to warn me that he knew as a fact that I was in touch with some of Kaledin's agents, though he would not mention their names. He could not, he said, act on my suggestion by taking the first step; but he would engage to allow British subjects to leave at once as soon as I published a statement in the Petrograd Press to the effect that His Majesty's Government were prepared to reconsider the cases of all interned Russians and to allow those who were not proved guilty of any illegal acts to return to Russia. He added that he quite understood the difficulties of my position. I had, as he was aware, been on intimate terms with many members of the Imperial family; but I had since the revolution been ill-advised and ill-informed, especially by Kerensky. I gather that he was referring to the fact that I had under-estimated the strength of the Bolshevik movement—and in this he was right. Kerensky, Tereschenko and some of the other Ministers had all misled me on this point, and had repeatedly assured me that the Government would be able to suppress them."

The above question was finally settled by His Majesty's Government consenting to repatriate the interned Russians, provided that freedom of movement was restored to British subjects in Russia.

December 7.

"Ever since the Bolshevik rising there have been

persistent rumours that their operations were being conducted by German staff officers in disguise. Information has now reached me, though I am unable to vouch for its accuracy, to the effect that there are six of their officers attached to Lenin's staff in the Smolny Institute.

"Lenin has issued a proclamation to all Mussulmans of the East, and in particular to those of India, calling on them to rise and free themselves from the hated yoke of alien capitalists."

CHAPTER XXXIV

1917–1918

MY diary continues to be a useful reminder of events:

December 8.

"I received a few days ago a telegram from Mr. Balfour giving a statement of our views with regard to the opening of armistice negotiations. It was based on a decision taken by the Paris conference that the Allied Ambassadors should be instructed to make it generally known that their Governments would be prepared to examine their war aims, as well as the possible conditions of a just and enduring peace, as soon as Russia had a stable Government recognized by the nation. I have embodied this telegram in a somewhat modified form in the first three paragraphs of the following statement, which I propose giving representatives of the Press this afternoon. In the other five paragraphs I reply to the attacks made on me by Lenin and other Bolshevik leaders:

Judging by recent practice, secret diplomacy will soon be a thing of the past and diplomatists must therefore more than ever have recourse to the Press as a channel of communication with the people. It is for this reason that I welcome your visit in order that through your kind offices I may appeal to the Russian democracy against those who wilfully misrepresent the policy of my Government.

What, you ask me, is our attitude towards Russia, and how do we view the negotiations for an armistice that have been opened on the Russian front? As regards the first of these questions, I can assure you that our attitude is one of sympathy for the Russian people, worn out as they are by their heavy sacrifices in this war, and by the general disorganization that is the inevitable consequence of any great political upheaval such as that of your revolution. We bear them no grudge, nor is there a word of truth in the reports that have been circulated to the effect that we are contemplating any coercive or punitive measures, in the event of their making a separate peace. With regard to the second question, the Council of the People's Commissaries, in opening negotiations with the enemy without previous consultation with the Allies, committed a breach of the agreement of August 23—September 5, 1914, of which we had a right to complain.

We cannot for a moment admit the validity of their contention that a Treaty, concluded with an autocratic Government, can have no binding force on the democracy, by which that Government has been replaced, as such a principle, if once accepted, would undermine the stability of all international agreements. But, while we repudiate this new doctrine, we do not desire to induce an unwilling ally to continue to contribute her share to the common effort by an appeal to our treaty rights. There are still higher principles to which we might, if we so desired it, appeal—principles, moreover, that are fully recognized by the Council of the People's Commissaries. They are those of a democratic peace; of a peace which accords with the wishes of the smaller and weaker nationalities; that repudiates the idea of extracting plunder out of conquered enemies under the name of war indemnities, or of incorporating in great Empires the territories of reluctant populations. Such, broadly speaking, is the peace which my Government, equally with the Russian democracy, desires to see secured to the world.

The Council of the People's Commissaries is, however, mistaken in thinking that they can secure this

peace by asking for an immediate armistice, to be followed by an agreement. They are, if I may use a homely expression, putting the cart before the horse. The Allies, on the contrary, desire to arrive first at a general agreement, in harmony with their declared aims, and then to secure an armistice. So far, not a word has been said by any German statesman to show that the ideals of Russian democracy are shared by the German Emperor or his Government, and it is with the German autocracy and not with the German people that negotiations for an armistice are being conducted. Is it likely that the Emperor William, when once he knows that the Russian army has ceased to exist as a fighting force, will be disposed to subscribe to a democratic and durable peace, such as the Russian people desire? No. The peace which he contemplates is a German and Imperialistic one. Though the Allies cannot send representatives to take part in the armistice negotiations, they are ready, so soon as a stable Government has been constituted that is recognized by the Russian people as a whole, to examine with that Government the aims of the war and the possible conditions of a just and durable peace. Meanwhile, they are rendering Russia the most effective assistance by holding up the bulk of the German armies on their respective fronts. The important victories recently achieved by the British troops near Cambrai are of good augury for the future, for the democratic peace which we all so ardently desire will never be attained till the military power of the Kaiser has been broken.

I have, I hope, shown how friendly are our feelings, and how sincerely we desire to stand by Russia in this hour of crisis. Can, I venture to ask, the same be said of Russia's feelings to us? Is it not a fact that hardly a day passes without some bitter attack being made on my country by what are now the official organs of the Press? To read them one would think that Great Britain provoked the war for her own imperialistic and capitalist aims, and that she is responsible for all the blood that is being shed. I am not going to repeat the oft-told tale of the origin of the war. I should only like to ask what would be Russia's position to-day had

we not intervened when Belgium's neutrality was violated by Germany. Without the British Fleet and our newly formed armies, in which three million volunteers had enlisted, Russia would to-day be Germany's vassal, and autocracy would reign supreme in Europe. Had we stood aside there would have been no revolution and no liberty for the people. The German army would have seen to that, and without our co-operation in the war Russia would have never won her freedom.

Are we not therefore entitled to claim that we should be treated as friends, instead of being made the object of scurrilous attacks? In his appeal to the Moslems of the East, Mr. Lenin spoke of us as rapacious extortioners and plunderers, while he incited our Indian subjects to rebellion. He placed us on a somewhat lower level than the Turks, to whom he would hand over Armenia, forgetful of the awful massacres already perpetrated there. It is an unheard-of thing for a man who claims to direct Russian policy to use such language of a friendly and Allied country. How does he think that the British tyrant enforces his will on India, with its 300 million inhabitants? Is he aware that the British garrison, which before the war amounted to 75,000 men, has since been reduced to 15,000 owing to the loyal support of the native races? Is he aware that one of our chief aims is to prepare the diverse and often hostile races for self-government, and that our Government encourages the formation of Indian societies and committees for this very purpose? Hardly any of them are anti-British, and none approach the Soviet in character.

The position of Englishmen in this country is not an enviable one at the present moment. They are singled out for attacks, or regarded with suspicion. Our propaganda bureau, which was started with the object of making our two countries better known to each other, is even accused of being in league with counter-revolutionaries. There is not the slightest foundation for such a charge, unless it is a crime to defend one's country against the calumnies and misrepresentations of German agents. So long as Russia was taking

an active part in the war our bureau, as was but natural, also conducted a war propaganda, but it no longer does so.

I wish the Russian people to know that neither I myself nor any agency under my control have any wish to interfere in the internal affairs of their country. During the seven years that I have been Ambassador here I have worked heart and soul to bring about the closest understanding between Russia and Great Britain; but, though I have associated, as it is my duty, with members of all parties, I have ever since the February revolution maintained a strictly neutral attitude. Prior to that date I did, it is true, endeavour to use all my influence with the ex-Emperor in favour of some form of Constitutional Government, and I repeatedly urged him to concede the legitimate wishes of the people. Now that his sovereign rights are vested in the Russian people, the latter will, I trust, pardon my transgression of the strict rules of diplomatic etiquette.

I would, in conclusion, venture to address one word of warning to the Russian democracy. Their leaders are, I know, animated by the sincere desire of creating a brotherhood of the proletariats of the world, in order to secure universal peace. I fully sympathize with the object which they have in view, but I would ask them to consider whether their present methods are likely to appeal to the democracies of Allied countries, and more especially to my own. They are creating, no doubt unintentionally, the impression that they set more store by the German than by the British proletariat. Their attitude towards us is more calculated to estrange than to attract the sympathies of the British working classes. During the great war that followed the French Revolution, the speeches delivered against Great Britain and the attempts made to provoke a revolution in our country did but steel the resolve of the British people to fight out the war to the end, and rallied them round the Government of the day. History will, if I mistake not, repeat itself in this twentieth century."

December 10.

"More than twenty-five journalists, representing

papers of every shade of opinion save the Bolsheviks, attended the interview to which I had invited the Press. It was rather a trying ordeal, as, after Harold Williams had read my statement in Russian and after copies had been handed round, the representatives of the *bourgeois* Press asked me a number of unnecessary and compromising questions which I could not answer without exposing myself to still more embarrassing questions from the Socialists. Then the correspondent of the *Novaya Jizn*, Gorki's paper, wanted to know what was meant by 'a Government recognized by the people,' and whether, when such a Government had been constituted, the Allies would at once open peace negotiations. I replied that a legally constituted Government ought, strictly speaking, to derive its powers from the Constituent Assembly, but that Russia was a country of such surprises that we would not consider ourselves bound by this definition. We were prepared to discuss peace negotiations with such a Government, but before negotiations could be opened with the enemy the Allies must first come to an agreement between themselves, as till such an agreement had been reached they could not treat with Germany with any hope of success. This reply has been severely criticized by the *Novaya Jizn* and by some of the Bolshevik papers as showing that we will not meet the wishes of the Russian democracy. My statement, on the other hand, has met with warm approval in diplomatic circles and has evoked a cordial expression of thanks from the Russian colony in London. Trotzky alluded to it in a speech which he delivered yesterday. I had, he said, expressed my affection for Russia in five columns of the Press, and the warmth of my senti-

ments had gladdened him. He would, however, prefer deeds to words."

December 18.

"I had a bad breakdown a week ago. On getting up in the morning I found I could not walk straight, but lurched about the room as if I were on board ship. Vertigo was, I gather, the cause. I have had to lie up ever since, and my doctor tells me that I am at the end of my tether. I, therefore, telegraphed for leave to come home and have now been authorized to start whenever I like. I am feeling better to-day and propose remaining on till the Constituent has either met or been sent about its business. The latter seems the more likely, as the Bolsheviks have issued a proclamation ordering the arrest of the Cadet leaders and declaring that the enemies of the people, the landlords and the capitalists, must have no place in that assembly. They have already arrested six Cadets who had been elected.

"On December 1 the Stavka was occupied by the Bolsheviks without any fighting, as General Dukhonin had not allowed the Death Battalion, who had placed themselves at his disposal, to offer any resistance. As Dukhonin was about to leave Mohileff by train he was dragged from his carriage and brutally murdered. On the 3rd the Bolshevik delegation, under Joffe, arrived at Brest Litovsk and commenced negotiations. As the Germans declined to accept their first proposals they returned to Petrograd on the 5th to consult the Government. They left again for Brest Litovsk on the 11th, and an armistice that was to continue till January 14 was signed on the 15th. The Germans accepted the clause in which the Bolsheviks had

insisted that during the armistice there was to be no transfer of troops to other fronts; but, as they attached the condition that the clause was not to apply to transfers which had already commenced, they have been able to move as many troops as they wished to our front. There was also a dangerous clause about the exchange of commodities. Peace negotiations are to begin to-day.

"Meanwhile the situation at Petrograd is getting worse and worse. There has lately been a perfect orgy of drunkenness. On the 7th a band of soldiers and sailors broke into the Winter Palace and pillaged the cellars, while five successive guards sent to arrest them did but follow their example and get hopelessly drunk. There was much shooting, but only a few soldiers were wounded. Eventually someone had the happy thought of ending the debauch by flooding the cellars, and in the process several drunken men were drowned. The soldiers have since been turning their attention to the cellars of private persons, and last night some friends of ours came to take refuge in the Embassy, as their cellars had been occupied by soldiers who were indulging in promiscuous firing. Robbery and murder are becoming common everyday proceedings, and at night people are stopped in the streets and stripped of all their clothes and valuables. Not a night passes without the constant firing of rifles and machine-guns, but nobody can ever tell me what it's all about. One night there was so much firing on the bridge, close to the Embassy, that my wife, whose bed is in a line with the windows of the room, slept on a mattress on the floor for greater security. One never knows what a day or night may bring forth."

December 19.

"Trotzky called this afternoon on the French Ambassador and said that the Allies had always refused to revise their war aims, and that, as he did not wish to be repeatedly put off as his predecessors in office had been, he had decided to open peace negotiations. They would, however, be suspended for a week so as to give the Allies the opportunity of participating in them. He was quite correct and civil. He has not honoured me with a visit for fear that I should decline to receive him.

"About a week ago Trotzky raised the question of diplomatic visas for his couriers' passports and threatened that, unless we accorded him full reciprocity, he would prevent the King's Messengers either entering or leaving Russia. In conversation with Captain Smith he said that he was perfectly entitled to do this, as I was accredited by a Government which did not recognize the present Russian Government, to one which no longer existed. I was, therefore, technically only a private individual. As I pointed out to the Foreign Office, we are quite at his mercy, and unless we come to an amicable arrangement we shall not only be deprived of our messenger service, but exposed to other reprisals, such as a refusal to pass our cyphered telegrams or to recognize our diplomatic status. Should that happen the Allied Governments would have to recall their Ambassadors."

December 22.

"I was instructed two days ago to inform Trotzky that we would grant visas, but that, as his Government had no accredited representative in London, he would

have no occasion to send a courier there. This made him perfectly furious, and he at once telegraphed to Torneå to stop our messenger crossing the frontier. This telegram fortunately arrived too late, and, as he had forgotten to telegraph to the Finnish frontier at Beliostroff, the messenger arrived in due course at Petrograd."

December 23.

"Roudneff, the Mayor of Moscow, Goltz, who belongs to the left wing of the social revolutionaries, and the Mayor of Petrograd, sent me a message the other day saying that they wanted to see me and suggesting that I should meet them in the Summer Garden so as not to attract attention. I declined to give them a clandestine meeting of this kind, but said that if they would come to the Embassy I should be happy to see them. Roudneff and Goltz came late this evening, having apparently taken every precaution not to be followed. It is symptomatic of the times we live in that a Socialist of Goltz' extreme views has to come to the Embassy secretly for fear of being arrested as a counter-revolutionary. They had, they said, come to ask me what would be our attitude were the Constituent Assembly to appeal to us to convert the present negotiations for a separate peace into negotiations for a general one. They next inquired whether, if Russia, who could not go on with the war, were to conclude a separate peace, we could do anything to help her from being forced to accept terms prejudicial to the interests of the Allies. Finally they wanted to know whether Mr. Lloyd George's statement that we were going to fight out the war to a finish was meant seriously or

intended as a bluff for the Germans. I returned non-committal answers to all their questions, and, on my explaining the reasons which forced us to go on with the war, they assured me that the social revolutionaries did not hold us, but the Germans, responsible for its continuation. As they were leaving, Roudneff told me that my chair in the municipal council chamber was always at my disposal as the Moscow Duma was not Bolshevik. I am not, however, tempted to occupy it in present circumstances."

December 28.

"On Christmas night we gave what will be our last entertainment at the Embassy to over a hundred members of our staff and of the various military missions. We began with a concert and variety entertainment, arranged by Colonel Thornhill, and ended up with a sit-down supper. In spite of the prevailing scarcity of provisions, my cook gave us a most sumptuous repast.

"In consequence of the reprisals with which Trotzky threatened British subjects, if his couriers were not at once accorded diplomatic passports, we have had to acquiesce, and I have been authorized to give the necessary visas unconditionally. In informing him of this, Captain Smith expressed, in my name, the hope that he would in the future try to seek an amicable adjustment of any debatable question that might arise before having recourse to arbitrary measures. Trotzky replied that he was always ready to adopt a conciliatory attitude, but that he had found by experience that such a policy did not pay and only led to protracted discussions.

"I have had a relapse, and my doctor insists on my

going home without awaiting the meeting of the Constituent. I have, therefore, decided to start on January 7. Lindley, who, ever since he was appointed Counsellor in 1915, has rendered me such valuable assistance, will remain in charge of the Embassy. In accordance, however, with the decision taken by the Paris Conference that the Allied Governments, while not condoning Russia's treason, are to enter into unofficial relations with the Petrograd Government, Lockhart, who had done such excellent work at Moscow, will act as our unofficial agent with them."

December 30.

"Trotzky has addressed a message to the people and Governments of all Allied countries. The Russian Revolution has, he declares, opened the door for an immediate general peace, and if only the Allied Governments will avail themselves of the present favourable opportunity, general negotiations may be commenced at once. If, on the other hand, they refuse to participate in the negotiations, the labouring classes in their respective countries must rise against those who refuse to give the people peace. He concluded by promising the former his full support."

December 31.

"The first detachment of the German Peace Delegation has arrived. They are, it is said, astounded at the state of anarchy prevailing here, and declare that Russia's financial and industrial ruin is so complete that no one country could by itself restore normal conditions."

January 2, 1918.

"The Germans have subscribed to the formula of a peace without annexations or contributions on the condition that the Allies will do the same; but there has been a hitch in the self determination clause. Trotzky affirms that the German delegates at Brest agreed to evacuate the occupied territory in order to leave the population free to take a decision without pressure. The Germans, on the other hand, have refused to withdraw their troops from Poland, Courland and the Baltic Provinces, on the ground that all these provinces wish to remain within the sphere of the Central Powers. On the Russian delegates asking for instructions they were told to give the Germans a "slap in the face." They have apparently done so metaphorically, and have warned them that, if they come to Petrograd, both they and the population will starve. Trotzky has declared the German conditions unacceptable, and in a speech which he delivered on New Year's Day, said:

> We will make no more concessions. Let the German soldiers know that there exists a new army that has no chiefs, no penal code, and that is not driven into battle with sticks. Let them know that there is a front, where each citizen soldier is animated with the spirit of the revolution, and let them take into account what such an army is capable of.

"In spite of this bombastic language, Trotzky knows perfectly well that the Russian army is incapable of fighting. The adoption of the system of election of officers by the men has, as someone remarked, had the result that cooks have been made colonels and colonels cooks. Even in some military hospitals a committee of

soldiers decides which of the wounded is to be operated. One regiment at the front is said to have sold to the Germans a battery and all the artillery horses."

January 5.

"Trotzky has raised another awkward question by proposing to appoint a Russian Representative in London. It is very difficult for us to consent to this, while, if we refuse, he may retaliate by divesting the Allied Embassies of their diplomatic immunities. I have pointed out to the Foreign Office that we shall have to choose between coming to some working arrangement with the Bolsheviks or breaking with them altogether. A complete rupture would leave the Germans a clear field in Russia and would deprive our vested interests of such protection as the Embassy can give them. We should, therefore, in my opinion, only have recourse to it in the last resort.

"Trotzky, who is leaving for Brest Litovsk to renew the peace negotiations, is now accusing us of intending to make a peace *sur le dos de la Russie*. He told a friend of mine yesterday that it is clear from what Mr. Lloyd George said in a recent speech that the Allies would like to see Germany make a peace "with annexations" with Russia, in the hope that she would, after gorging herself in the east, be more disposed to make concessions in the west. It seems pretty clear from this that he is preparing to beat a retreat and to accept Germany's terms. It is not easy to understand what he is really driving at. Even if he does take money from the Germans for his own purposes he is not their paid agent, though he could not serve them better if he were. Both he and Lenin are out to overthrow all the

so-called imperialistic governments, but it is against Great Britain rather than against Germany that their main offensive will be directed. The situation is quite hopeless, as the Bolsheviks have monopolized all the energies and organizing power of the nation. Even were the social revolutionaries to form a Government, with a majority in the Constituent Assembly, they are incapable of making a stand either against the Bolsheviks or the Germans."

January 6.

"Our last day in Petrograd!—and yet, in spite of all that we have gone through, we are sad at the thought. Why is it that Russia casts over all who know her such an indefinable mystic spell that, even when her wayward children have turned their capital into a pandemonium, we are sorry to leave it? I cannot explain the reason, but we *are* sorry. This afternoon I paid a sorrowful farewell visit to my friend, the Grand Duke Nicholas Michailovich. Though he faces the future with his usual courage, and though he was as witty and charming as ever, he has, I think, the presentiment that sooner or later his fate will be sealed. We both, indeed, felt that we should never meet again, and as I bade him good-bye he embraced me in the old Russian fashion, kissing me on both cheeks and on the forehead. (The Grand Duke Nicholas, his two brothers, and the Grand Duke Paul were shot by the Bolsheviks in the following summer.) Then, when I got back to the Embassy, I wrote a farewell minute thanking the members of my staff from my heart for their many services during those strenuous years of war and revolution, and telling them how warmly I appreciated the

loyal support and the many proofs of personal attachment which they had given me. I have just received a charming note in reply which touched me very deeply, written by Lindley on their behalf. To-night we dine with Benjy Bruce, who, as head of the Chancery, has had to bear the burden and heat of the day. He had been my right-hand man throughout, always trying to spare me and to relieve me of as much work as possible, a true and devoted friend for whom I have a sincere affection."

CHAPTER XXXV

1918–1922

THE start from the Embassy in the early hours of that mid-winter morning was not calculated to cheer us. There was no electric light, and the candles placed here and there on the staircase and in the corridors did but serve to accentuate the prevailing darkness. Then, when, after a slow motor drive through the deep snow, we reached the Finnish station, the way that the evil-looking Red Guards on duty there scowled on us as we passed made me wonder whether we should get through our journey unmolested. Trotzky had made no difficulties about my leaving, and had granted me the usual customs facilities. He had, however, refused to extend this privilege as an act of courtesy to General Knox, Admiral Stanley and the five other officers who were travelling with us unless I guaranteed that similar facilities would be accorded any military attachés or officers whom he might wish to send to England. I told him that I could not do this. Our officers, I pointed out, were returning home after having served several years in Russia, and as he had no Russian officers in England who wished to return to Russia, there could be no question of reciprocity. The Commissariat for Foreign Affairs had also declined to take any steps to reserve special accommodation for us on the train; but having won the station-master's

heart by the present of two bottles of old brandy, we succeeded in getting a whole sleeping-car placed at the disposal of our party. In spite of the early hour and of the bitter cold, most of my colleagues, as well as the members of my staff and several friends from the British colony, came to see us off and to bid us God-speed.

We had, on the whole, a very comfortable journey, and having brought food and wine with us, we had very cheery picnic meals in our carriage. The first day passed without any incident; but in the middle of the night we were woken up by some half-dozen armed soldiers who demanded our passports. After examining them and finding that they were in order, they left us in peace and we went to sleep again. The next day (January 8) was rather a trying one, as the farther north we got the deeper was the snow and the slower our progress. We were timed to arrive at Torneå, on the Finnish side of the frontier, at midday; but on reaching Uleaborg late in the afternoon, we were met by the British consul at Torneå, who told us that there was no chance of our catching the Swedish train. He accordingly arranged that we should sleep in our carriage and that the engine should be left on the train and shunt us about during the night in order to keep it heated.

We had a long wait the next morning at the Torneå station, where the customs officials made difficulties about passing our luggage. As we had been warned to take as few things as possible with us, we had only brought the canvases of six or seven of our best pictures as well as a few valuable pieces of plate, leaving most of our wearing apparel and other posses-

sions in the Embassy. When, thanks to a judicious distribution of roubles, these difficulties were at last overcome, we drove in open sledges for some twenty minutes, crossing a frozen river, to an hotel on the Swedish side of the frontier at Haparanda. I had woken up in the morning with a bad sore throat and was afraid that I was in for an attack of influenza; but whether it was the intense cold—80 degrees of frost Fahrenheit—that killed the germs, or relief at having got safely through to a civilized country, I enjoyed an excellent luncheon and felt quite myself again.

After an early dinner we had once more to face the cold and to drive to the station, where the Swedish authorities had kindly reserved a most comfortable sleeping-car for us. We reached Stockholm about six o'clock on the evening of Friday, the 11th, after a journey of forty hours, and were met by Esme Howard and by Colebrooke, who had been honorary attaché at Petrograd. On the next day we lunched with the Howards at the Legation and had tea with the Crown Prince and Princess in their palace, and left in the evening for Christiania, which we reached on the afternoon of the 13th. On arriving there I was handed the following very flattering telegram from Mr. Balfour, which had, as I subsequently learned, been published in the London press:

I am very sorry to learn that your health is still so unsatisfactory.

The War Cabinet desires me to express to you their warmest thanks for all the eminent services which you have rendered your country. They hope that, by a much-needed rest, your health may soon be restored, and that you may long be spared to continue your career of public usefulness.

May I be permitted to add my own cordial acknowledgments for all you have done for us? If I may be permitted to say so, your courage, resource and character have been an inspiration to us all, and you have worthily upheld the great traditions and ideals of your country.

We spent a very pleasant evening with the Findlays, who had kindly asked us to dine at the Legation, and started at half-past seven on Monday morning, the 14th, for Bergen. Owing to some mistake no carriage had been reserved for us, and we had to travel third class for the first three hours of the journey. We only reached Bergen after midnight, and had but a few hours' sleep, having to get up the next morning soon after six. As it was considered advisable to keep our movements a secret from the Germans, we were fetched while it was still dark and smuggled on board the King's small yacht, the *Heimdal*, that was to take us down the fiord to a sheltered bay, close to the point where the cruiser that was being sent for us from Leith, was expected at eleven o'clock. By the time we got there a regular blizzard was blowing and there was no sign of the cruiser. After waiting a couple of hours we were told that as there was now no chance of her arriving before the next morning, we must spend the rest of the day and the night on the yacht. The accommodation on board was very restricted, but the commodore did everything that was possible to make us comfortable. He plied us with food and drink, gave my wife and daughter his own, and me the first lieutenant's cabin, and arranged for the rest of the party to sleep on the floor of the saloon.

Next morning the weather cleared a little, and between eleven and twelve the cruiser *Yarmouth* was

sighted and we went to meet her. It was, however, still blowing a gale, so we had to lead her to a sheltered bay where we could tranship. Captain Grace, a son of the famous cricketer, was kindness itself, and did all he could to make what proved to be a very bad crossing as tolerable as possible for my poor wife and daughter, who were both very bad sailors. Not being myself subject to sea-sickness, I readily fell in with his suggestion that we should have luncheon before starting; and, after partaking of beef-steak pie and treacle pudding, retired with a big cigar to my cabin. But I had never before experienced the antics which a light cruiser can play in a heavy sea, and paid the penalty for my imprudence.

On the following morning (the 17th) we got into calm water, reaching Leith in lovely weather about three o'clock, after a passage that had lasted twenty-six instead of the usual fourteen hours. At Leith we found motors waiting to take us to our hotel at Edinburgh, where Admiral Burney, the naval commander-in-chief, kindly came to congratulate us on our safe arrival. After a very cheerful dinner we left by the night express for London, which we reached early the next morning, after having been exactly eleven days *en route*. My friend, Ian Malcolm, met us at King's Cross with congratulatory messages from the Prime Minister and Mr. Balfour.

In the course of the afternoon I received a most kind and gracious telegram from the King, welcoming us home; and when Their Majesties returned to London we had the honour of lunching with them at Buckingham Palace. The Lord Mayor, Sir Charles Hanson, in a letter inviting us to dine at the Mansion House,

was also good enough to express the City of London's admiration for the manner in which I had faced the difficulties of an ever-changing situation under three successive régimes. Everybody indeed, the Press included, was as nice and sympathetic as could be. Invitations to dinners, both private and official, were showered on us, and, as a lady remarked to me, I was for the moment the Ambassador *à la mode*. Besides having several long conversations with Mr. Balfour, I had the privilege of breakfasting with the Prime Minister and of discussing the Russian situation with him. I also attended two Cabinet meetings at No. 10, where I met with a most cordial reception, Lord Curzon assuring me that the telegram which I had received at Christiania expressed the feelings of all the members of the War Cabinet.

I was, however, so tired both in mind and body that, on lunching with Lord Reading, who wanted to know my views about Russia before starting on his mission to Washington, I broke down altogether and had to be taken back to Buckland's Hotel. My doctor told me that I was worn out and ordered me complete rest. As ill luck would have it, there was a bad air-raid that night, and as there was a skylight in the adjoining passage the manager insisted on my coming downstairs, in spite of my high temperature. I felt far too ill to care whether we were bombed or not, but I had to obey and to spend several hours in an armchair in a comatose state.

It was only after a few weeks' rest at Newquay that I was able to resume any active work. Though I had now no regular official duties, my time for the next eighteen months was fully occupied by seconding

my wife's efforts to minister to the needs of the British and Russian refugees and by pleading Russia's cause before the British public. I was chairman of some half-dozen committees that dealt with various sides of the Russian question. I was also president of the British Russia Club that had been founded by some of our business men, with vested interests in Russia, who had realized that it was only by co-ordinated and concerted action that they could hope to save anything from the wreck. The club gradually became a rallying point for all who were interested in Russia, and, as most of its members had a practical knowledge of all the conditions of Russia's economic, industrial and financial life, it was able to place much useful information at the disposal of His Majesty's Government. I so deeply sympathized with the losses which most of its members had sustained that I gave it my wholehearted support, and took the chair at its dinners whenever any distinguished guest, such as Mr. Winston Churchill, honoured them with his presence.

In my first conversations with Mr. Balfour and other members of the Government I had deprecated a complete rupture with the Bolsheviks on the ground that it would leave the Germans a clear field in Russia. On the other hand, I had laid stress on the fact that, while we had nothing to hope for from the Social revolutionaries, Lenin and Trotzky, though very big men, represented a destructive and not a constructive force. They could pull down, but they could not build up. Their end and aim was to sweep away all the old so-called imperialistic Governments, and they would never, as I told the Prime Minister at the time, work

with a man whom they regarded as the very personification of imperialism.

As the situation changed for the worse, I modified the views which I had originally expressed. The Bolsheviks had dissolved the Constituent and had murdered two ex-Ministers; while Litvinoff had, in a speech at Nottingham, openly preached revolution. To allow an unofficial diplomatic agent to carry on an active revolutionary propaganda in our midst seemed to me inadmissible; yet were we to take disciplinary measures against him Trotzky would retaliate with reprisals against members of our embassy. We had therefore to choose between coming to terms with the Bolsheviks, on the basis of complete reciprocity in all things, or to break with them altogether and to withdraw our embassy. I was strongly in favour of the latter course, more especially as there now seemed some prospect of the Allies affording material assistance to the loyal elements in South Russia, who had not yet submitted either to the Bolsheviks or the Germans.

In all the speeches which I made during the course of the next twelve months, either at the Russia Club or elsewhere, I consistently advocated a policy of armed intervention. The Russian problem, I contended, was the dominating factor in the international situation, and so long as it was left unsolved there could be no permanent peace in Europe. Moreover, to leave Russia to her fate might result in Germany one day securing the control of Russia's vast man power and untold mineral wealth; while to allow the Bolsheviks to consolidate their position would mean the dissemination by their agents of subversive Communist doctrines

through the greater part of Asia and Europe. I did not advocate an expedition on a large scale to effect what the opponents of intervention termed the conquest of Russia, but the stiffening of General Denikin's and the other anti-Bolshevik armies by the despatch of a small volunteer force that might easily have been raised among our home and Colonial troops after the Armistice. The Bolshevik army was not then as strong as it is at present, and a mere handful of British troops, with tanks and aeroplanes, would have enabled General Yudenitch to take Petrograd. On the other hand, had we, in addition to supplying General Denikin with war material, sent out a British general at the head of a small expeditionary force to control his operations, and to insist on his pursuing a conciliatory policy towards the peasants, Moscow would also have been captured; and the Bolshevik Government would not long have outlived the fall of those two capital cities. The question of finance had, I readily admit, to be taken into account, for with the income tax at 6s. in the £ we could not lightly embark on an enterprise of this nature; but, had the object of that enterprise been attained, the money which it would have cost would have been well invested. We should have expedited the opening to trade of the richest country in Europe, we should have safeguarded many important British vested interests in Russia, and, with the elimination of the Bolshevik menace to the world's peace, we should have had better reason to face the future with confidence than we have at present.

But few people, I am aware, will take my view of the question, as our intervention proved such a failure in practice that it has been generally condemned in

principle as a mistaken policy. Carried out, as it was, in a half-hearted spirit it was undoubtedly a mistake, and the money spent on it was wasted. The Allied Governments, without any clearly defined policy and afraid of committing themselves, had recourse to half-measures which were almost bound to fail. They supported Denikin with one hand and they held out the other to the Bolsheviks. They furnished the former with war material and they invited the latter to a conference at Prinkipo—a proposal that was directly responsible for the defection of a large body of Don Cossacks and for the serious setback in the south that resulted from it. Had intervention been carried out on other lines the result might have been very different. It did not, however, serve, as is so often asserted, to drive loyal Russians into the Bolshevik camp.

Their defection was due to other causes. While the Prinkipo scheme had disheartened many of our friends and sympathizers, the recognition of the Caucasian Republics and of the Baltic States, coupled with the unfounded suspicion that we were encouraging the Poles to annex territory that was ethnically Russian, was resented by many patriotic Russians. It was the fear that the Allies were intent on the dismemberment of Russia, and not intervention, that reinforced the ranks of the Red Army. Nor is the precedent of the French Revolution—that is frequently cited as an argument against intervention—applicable in our case. For, whereas the Austrians and Prussians intervened for the express purpose of replacing the Bourbons on the French throne, we never for a moment contemplated imposing the Romanoffs on an unwilling

Russia. We made it clear from the very first that any such idea was far from our thoughts, and that our object was to secure for the Russian people the right of self-determination, so that they might be free to choose whatever form of government they thought best.

Early in October, 1919, I received a most kind letter from Lord Curzon telling me that he had submitted my name to the King for the post of His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome, and expressing the hope that I would accept that office for a term of two years. Having served at Rome as Third Secretary in 1878 and as Counsellor of Embassy in 1900, I was delighted to go back there as Ambassador and to close my career amid familiar scenes which were associated with so many happy memories of earlier years. It naturally entailed my giving up all my Russian work and resigning the presidency of the British Russia Club. In taking leave of its members at a luncheon, at which they were good enough to present me with my portrait by the well-known Canadian artist, Mr. Sheldon Williams, I briefly recapitulated what I had said on previous occasions about the Russian situation. I had not yet kissed hands on my appointment and was still only Ambassador designate, and as this was to be my farewell speech on Russia, I felt perfectly justified in doing so. But the Cabinet thought otherwise, and a couple of days later I was sent for by Lord Hardinge and reprimanded, in their name, for having propounded a policy contrary to theirs. I replied that I had been careful to abstain from criticizing them, and that I had but given expression to my personal views, as I had never been able to make out what their

policy really was. At the end of October we left for Rome.

Short as was the duration of my mission to the Quirinal, I had in the course of those two years to treat with three successive Prime Ministers—Nitti, to whom Mr. Lloyd George had given his photograph, with the inscription, "To my kindred spirit"; Giolitti, the oldest in years but the youngest in mind of Italy's elder statesmen; and Bonomi; and with four Foreign Ministers—Tittoni, Scialoja, Sforza and della Torretta, who is now Italian Ambassador in London. I do not propose to commit the indiscretion of recounting the inner political history of these two very interesting years, and will only record the fact that my official relations with all these distinguished men were throughout of a most cordial character. As I never mixed myself up in Italian party politics, a change of Ministry did not in any way affect me. With Count Sforza, with whom, first as Under-Secretary and then as Minister for Foreign Affairs, I was in constant touch for more than a year and a half, and with the Marquis della Torretta, whom I had known as Counsellor of Embassy at Petrograd, I was, moreover, on terms of close personal friendship.

Lord Curzon showed me throughout the greatest kindness and consideration, but I must admit—and I can do so without betraying any official secret—that I found my position as Ambassador very different from what it had been when I was in Russia. There were now virtually two Foreign Offices in Downing Street, and the precept enjoined by the Scriptures with regard to our exercise of the virtue of charity was applied to the conduct of diplomacy. Though I was brought up

in the old school of diplomacy, I am not in the least biased against the methods of the new. On the contrary, I fully appreciate the many advantages which accrue from regular personal intercourse between the Allied Premiers and Foreign Ministers by means of conferences and supreme councils. But an Ambassador can contribute to the success of such meetings by doing the preliminary spadework and by endeavouring to predispose the Government to which he is accredited in favour of the policy advocated by his own Government. In discussing this question with Sir Maurice Hankey when he was staying with us at the Embassy, I pointed out that an Ambassador could only do this if he was taken into his Government's confidence, and that if, on the contrary, he was kept in the dark he might, in his conversations with the Foreign Minister, give expression to views diametrically opposed to theirs.

Though I had not the same interesting work to do as I had in Russia, there were ample compensations outside politics, and the two years which we spent in Rome passed far too quickly. There were old friendships to be renewed and new ones to be formed. There were old haunts to be re-visited and new and more distant scenes, which had not been so accessible in pre-motor days, to be explored. There were walks on the Alban Hills, with the lakes of Albano and Nemi glittering like twin gems in their sylvan setting, with the Campagna at our feet, and with Rome and St. Peter's in the background. There was the Rosebery Villa at Posillipo, overlooking the Bay of Naples, where Nature has blended together all that is beautiful on land and sea to produce one of her greatest master-

pieces. Then, when we had time, we wandered among the old Umbrian and Tuscan towns, or, motoring over one of the passes of the Apennines, surveyed the wonderland of Italy.

But, alas! though we did not then know it, our happy days were already numbered. It was during our last visit to Posillipo, in the summer of 1920, that I first read the writing on the wall that told me of the coming of a great sorrow. We spent the month of August at Fiuggi, a fashionable watering-place half-way between Rome and Naples. We still took long motor-drives over the mountain roads, or watched the sunset from one of the many fortress-towns perched on the hill-tops that had played their part in the old feuds of the Colonnas. But I, who alone realized what the future had in store for us, was but too conscious of the fact that "there had passed a glory from the earth."

We returned to Rome early in September, and spent the rest of the autumn there. At the end of November we came home, and on the 25th of the following April, after five months of incessant suffering, my wife found rest and peace.

The generous tributes paid by the Press to her memory and the sympathy shown me by countless friends both touched and comforted me, but it was only in work that demanded a concentrated effort that I could hope to find distraction from the one engrossing thought. The writing of this book has provided me with that work and has served its purpose, though it has also, by waking happy memories of the past, sometimes added to the sadness of the present. But when, as I close its pages, I reflect on the happiness

that was mine for thirty-seven years, I can but take to heart the lesson conveyed in Dryden's well-known lines:

> Come fair or foul, or rain or shine,
> The joys I have possessed, in spite of fate, are mine.
> Not Heaven itself over the past has power;
> And what has been has been, and I have had my hour.

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